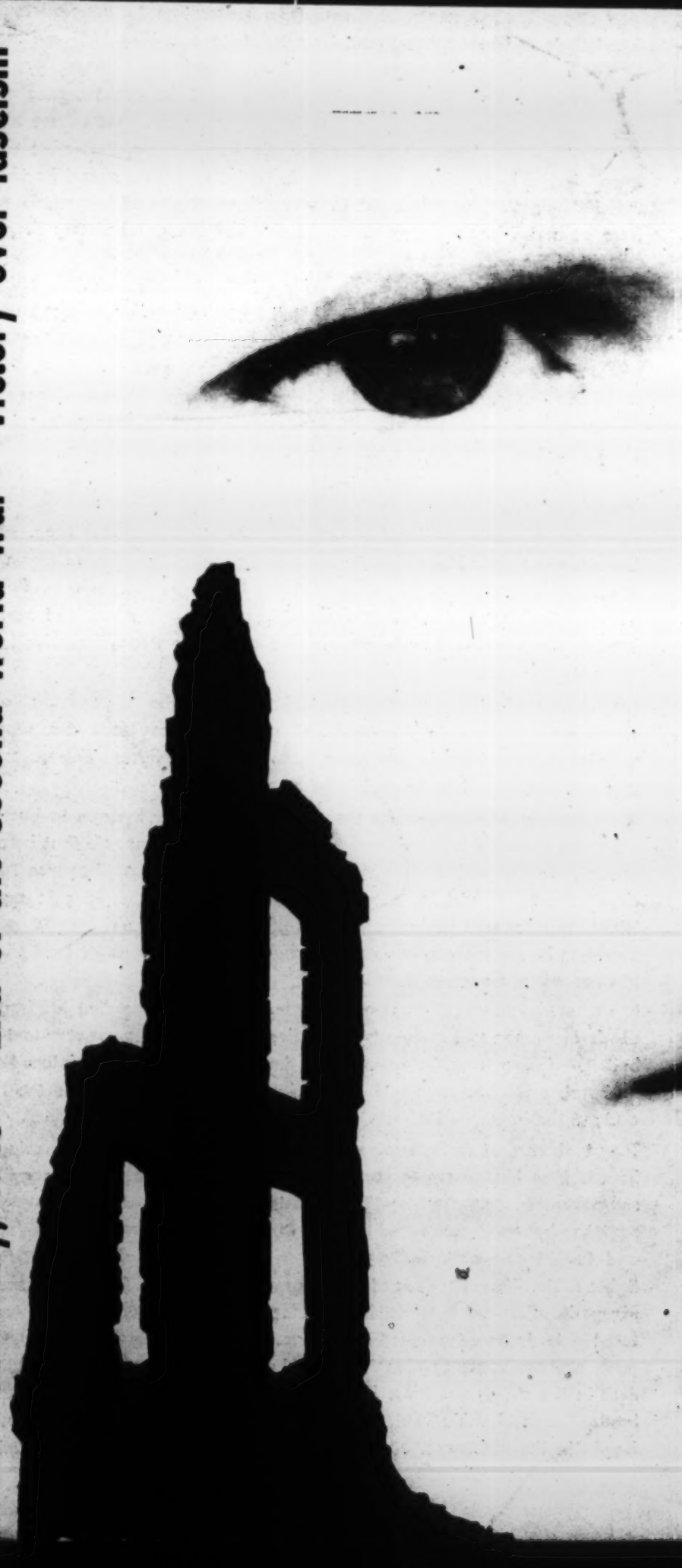
20th
ANNIVERSARY
W.I.D.F.
1945-1965

8th. May, 1945 · End of the second world war · Victory over fascism



A DATE THAT TIME WILL NOT ERASE

There are events and dates in the history of man that implacable time cannot erase. Their memory continues from generation to generation, it is handed down like a sacred relic from father to son. May 1945 will remain one of the most radiant pages in the history of peoples.

It happened 20 years ago. Caught in the vise of the great armies of the anti-hitler coalition, nazi Germany, which had savagely launched the second world war, surrendered unconditionally. German fascism, that most vicious expression of imperialism, with its barbarous racist ideology and its aims of world domination, was brought to earth. The peoples of the whole world were in a deliriously happy mood, celebrating the great victory they had bought at the price of such sacrifices.

But it is impossible to enumerate fully all the terrible sacrifices that the Second World War cost humanity. A full 2,000 million of the 2,170 million human beings then living on our planet were brought into participation in the war in one way or another. 110 million men were mobilised. Almost 50 million fell on the battle fields or were victims of hunger, disease and epidemics, and of this number 11 million met death in the fascist concentration camps. 34 million persons were wounded or mutilated. And every soldier killed or mutilated was a brother, son, father or fiancee of some woman! What unhappiness and suffering war brought to women!

Cities and towns burned and looted; factories, plants, railway lines, all put out of service; schools, hospitals and nursery schools destroyed. Inestimable cultural riches reduced to ashes. Thousands left without shelter, families losing their dear ones, children becoming orphans on the roads of war. The heaving earth where people were buried alive. The death factories in the concentration camps.

The whole world has an unpayable debt to those who rid it of the horrors of nazism. We bow to the tombs of all those who made the supreme sacrifice of their lives for the happy future of our children! But we cannot let the monstrous crimes of nazism be forgotten.

The sufferings and losses that the Second World War brought to humanity are unprecedented in all history. And it was the Soviet people that bore the greatest burden and had to make the greatest sacrifices, because of the circumstances, it had to take on the main share of the struggle against Hitler. The torment of war killed 25 million persons and left 20 million homeless in our country, one can say that there is not a single family which has not lost at least one dear one.

In the unprecedented struggle conducted by peoples against fascism, the deeds of women will remain forever alive in history. To a great extent they built the victory over the enemy with their own hands. They replaced their husbands and sons gone to the front in the factories. They tilled the fields and fed the front and the rear.

They took care of anti-aircraft defence in the cities and villages, saving the houses from incendiary bombs. They fought arms in hand: brave aviators, sharpshooters, parachutists; telegraphists and radio operators, courageous stretcher bearers, nurses and doctors who rescued the wounded under fire and fought self-sacrificingly to save their lives. Partisans and resistance fighters. The life and deeds of Zoya Kosmodemianskaya, Danielle Casanova, Margarita Fornalska, Anna Frank, Electra Apostolu, Anna Maimounova, tortured to death or executed by the fascists, have become legend. And how many other unknown heroines! In Yugoslavia alone, 25,000 women gave their lives in the struggle against fascism; in France, Italy, Belgium, the Netherlands, Czechoslovakia and other countries, tens of thousands of women fought in the resistance. 18 million American women and almost 8 million

British women took part in the war effort of their country. Thousands of patriotic Soviet women took part in the struggle against the fascist hordes, either directly on the battle-field, or through their self-sacrificing work. Over 120,000 of them were awarded orders and military medals for their courage and heroism and about 80 received the top ranking honour of Hero of the Soviet Union.

For women, the sufferings, work and the struggle during those terrible years of inhuman tension were not without consequences. Ripened in action, becoming ever more conscious of their more important role in society, the women of numerous countries founded in the course of the struggle against fascism, their democratic women's organisations which, in December 1945, came together within the Women's International Democratic Federation. The WIDF was the reflection of the hopes and aspirations of women who had gone through the trials and sufferings of the war years, who had done so much for the common victory and who proclaimed their right to be respected as human beings, to have their role in the family and society recognised and the right to a better life for themselves and their children. The Federation brought together in its ranks women of the most varied political opinions, united by a common will to never again allow a rebirth of fascism, to bar the road forever to war and by joint efforts, to achieve the triumph of democracy and equality, and to build a radiant future for their children.

20 years have gone by since then. During those years the women have proved by action, their deep attachment to peace, their undying hatred of war, militarism and fascism. How many times in this period has the world found itself on the verge of a new world war, forced there by the imperialists, and every time the women were with those who, by their burning protests and energetic actions, have prevented the new crime from being carried through.

Today women are fully conscious that a new danger has appeared in the life of humanity: nuclear weapons, the use of which renders war 100 times more destructive and deadly. Thermonuclear war would imperil all that lives on earth. The ashes of the victims of the last war tear at the heart of mothers, the cries of children tortured or murdered leave them no rest. Thus women are working determinedly and without respite for peace. In their actions for peace, for peaceful coexistence of countries with differing social systems and for general disarmament, they have recourse to the most varied forms and methods; they protest vehemently against the dissemination of nuclear arms and demand their destruction; they struggle for the suppression of military bases and the withdrawal of troops from foreign soil, for the peaceful solution of all international differences, for the freedom and independence of all peoples. Women also act on all these problems and actively participate in the common struggle of the forces of peace and democracy.

Let us remember the role played by women in 1950 in the collection of signatures on the Stockholm Appeal for the banning of the atomic bomb. Let us remember the efforts of women to put an end to the war in Korea, Vietnam, Algeria, Egypt, Cyprus, in defence of revolutionary Cuba and of all peoples struggling for their freedom and national independence.

Women have won the respect of all by their energetic actions against the remilitarisation of West Germany and the spirit of revanchism growing there, against the creation of the multi-lateral nuclear force of NATO, against the aggressive actions of the United States in North and South Vietnam.

New organisations and new movements are growing in different countries in the course of the struggle of women for peace, against the danger of a nuclear war. In the U.S.A. the young movement "Women Strike for Peace" has proven to be an effective force in the struggle against the aggressive aims of officialdom; Canada's "Voice of Women", "Mothers against War" of Great Britain, the Japanese mothers' movement, the women's movement in the German Democratic Republic and the German Federal Republic for the peaceful reunification of their country, against militarism and the spirit of revanchism in West Germany, all these associations and movements, and still many more, develop great activities and bring a precious contribution to the common struggle of peoples for peace.

The women of the Soviet Union and of other socialist countries who are building with their own hands a new society, are particularly desirous of peace and ardently fight for it. They take up every initiative of the WIDF for the defence of peace, of freedom and national independence of peoples. With all their hearts they establish and tighten the bonds of friendship with the women of other countries. They vehemently protest against the acts of imperialist aggression and with joy give material and moral aid to their sisters fighting for freedom and national independence. The women of the socialist countries have the advantage in their activities of receiving the full support of their governments and themselves warmly support the peaceful policy of their states.

In celebrating the 20th anniversary of victory over fascist Germany, we note with joy the constant growth and strengthening of the peace forces. The struggle of peoples against the monopolies, for democracy and social progress is constantly growing. The movement for peace, against the aggressive policy of the imperialists is constantly spreading. The struggle of peoples for the complete abolition of colonialism is intensifying each day.

But the imperialists, wishing to maintain their positions, intensify the arms race, they are carrying out acts of aggression in numerous regions of the world, trying to aggravate the international situation, weaken the national liberation movement and deprive the peoples of the independence they have so dearly won.

For this reason, all the ordinary peoples of the world must be vigilant. We must remember the serious lessons of the Second World War and, in line with the Appeal of the World Congress of Women, we must unify our efforts even more closely in defence of peace and the national independence of peoples. Let us do all to prevent the creation of a multilateral nuclear force by the NATO countries, which would open access to nuclear arms for the West German revanchists. Let us not allow the West German militarists to carry out their provocative plan of planting a chain of atomic mines along the borders the G.F.R. shares with its eastern neighbors. Let us increase our protests at the growing American aggression against the people of North and South Vietnam which is going to the most inhuman ends! Let the demand for the withdrawal of American troops from South Vietnam, so that the South Vietnamese people can freely decide their own fate, and for an end to aggression against the Democratic Republic of Vietnam, become irresistible!

Let us express our solidarity with the people of the Dominican Republic invaded by American forces for the purpose of drowning in blood the struggle of the people for progress and freedom.

With all our strength let us defend everywhere peace in the world, so that our children shall never know the horrors of a new world war!

NINA POPOVA,
WIDF Vice-President
President, Soviet Women's Comittee.

WOMEN
OF THE WHOLE WORLD 5/1965

International monthly magazine published by the W.I.D.F. in English, French, German, Russian and Spanish

Editorial Board:

Unter den Linden 13, 108 Berlin, Tel. 20 03 31.

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FOR THE INFORMATION OF OUR READERS

For your information we list below the new annual subscription rate which came into force in October, or for those readers who have already a subscription, applicable when their renewal date comes around.
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news in b

U.N. Human Rights Commission asks for punishment for war crimes

The decision of the GFR's Parliament to date the Statute of Limitations as applied to war crimes from January 1, 1970, has aroused great indignation throughout the world.

In a resolution unanimously adopted on April 9 the U.N.'s Human Rights Commission (photo below) asked that "those guilty of war crimes against humanity" be sought out, arrested and punished equitably by competent tribunals. The document asks the Secretary General to undertake a study of problems of international law having to do with these crimes, in order to make clear their imprescriptability. The report of such a study would be given priority on the agenda of the next session.

The prescription of crimes against humanity must be unreservedly and forever rejected.

We publish below a letter sent us by one of our readers on this question:

"I am deeply upset by the decision of the Bonn authorities to prescribe nazi crimes.

"In my mother's family there were four sisters and three brothers. Two of the brothers returned, but they were invalids. We, who were orphans, now ourselves have children and we bitterly regret that our childhood was deprived of all paternal love and attention.

"My mother and her sisters were widowed while still young. Their happiness of a family life with husbands and children was wiped out. How 'good' they are, these gentlemen of Bonn, who so easily forgive those guilty of so many crimes, of the wiping out of so many families, not only in my country, but in numerous others.

"No, we cannot forget the dead and lost in this war, who were perhaps gassed in the concentration camps or buried alive.

"We Russians do not hold a grudge, but to absolve the worst crimes committed by the nazis against humanity would be to insult our dead.

"We must not forgive, not only because today human hearts are still bleeding, but to prevent those murderers from committing other crimes.

"It is the duty of all women to help prevent this. Every one must make her contribution to the cause of peace. Everyone must be conscious of her responsibility.

"What I have written could have been written by thousands and thousands of women . . .

Lydia Oulibycheva, Salehard (USSR)"

▪ Workers defend their rights

Recently, women of numerous countries have effectively participated in working class struggles, or conducted their own activities against unemployment, low wages and bad working conditions.
For instance, in Bombay, India, 300 young working women from a number of pharmaceutical factories carried out a one day hunger strike last February 20, and demonstrated in the centre of the city, demanding that an end be put to the objectionable ruling which forbade them to marry. They also protested against the practise of employers refusing to hire married women to escape paying the maternity leave stipulated by law. Following this action, the Cyanamid India Co. did away with its rule banning marriage.

brief

Visit to Ravensbruck

For March 8 women from 14 countries, at the invitation of the Democratic Union of German Women of the GDR, visited the old concentration camp of Ravensbruck. Among the delegation was Mrs. Patrice Lumumba, widow of the hero of the Congolese people, Patrice Lumumba. During the visit, two former prisoners in the camp, Mrs. Emmi Handke und Marta Jung, told the delegates of the terrible sufferings they had endured in this camp and of the solidarity shown by the women in those frightful conditions.

New success in space exploration

Of late we have seen startling successes in the field of space exploration and the construction of space ships. Each new space flight opens tremendous new perspectives for humanity.

It was with bated breath that on March 19 the world watched the flight of the Sovied space ship "Voskhod 2" with the two cosmonauts Pavel Beliaev and Alexi Leonov aboard. With the stepping out into free space of the latter, protected only by a spacesuit, an unprecedented feat was carried out. For the first time man moved freely in space.

Four days later, in the "Gemeni" operation, the two American astronauts Virgil Grissom and John Young, made three revolutions around the earth in the spaceship, changing orbit twice during the flight.

In British Guiana, homage to Alice Kowzilia

Last March 7, the Progressive Women's Organisation paid homage to Alice Kowzilia, a leader of the organisation, murdered March 5, 1964 in a demonstration in which she was participating for the recognition of her trade union. Our photo shows the women parading to the tomb of the heroine. Leading the demonstration we can see Mrs. P. Sahoye, General Secretary of the PWO, Mrs. P. Benn, President and Mrs. J. Reece, Secretary of the organisation.

At the time of the recent visit in Guiana of the British Minister of Colonies, Mr. Anthony Greenwood, activists of the PWO, carried out a vigil, wearing black arm-bands which bore their demands. They particularly asked for the freeing of political detainees, the holding of new elections with a changed electoral system, as those recently held were conducted anti-democratically, the right to vote at 18 years of age, the elimination of racial and other discriminations in the administration and public services.

Solidarity with the Chilean people

Serious earth tremors took place in Chile on March 28, which brought devastation to a territory of over 40,000 square kilometres. The quake caused 400 deaths and thousands of wounded. In the affected region about 90% of the houses were either destroyed or badly damaged.

Most of the country's cities have suffered damage. In the capital, Santiago, houses were also destroyed (our photo). The WIDF has sent the Chilean women and the Chilean people its sincere condolences and has demonstrated its solidarity.

▪ Bloody repression in Casablanca

Towards the end of March in Casablanca Moroccan workers and students took to the streets to express their dissatisfaction at the frightful economic and social situation of the country, and demanded a change.

Police repression killed 109 and wounded 500 to 600. The victims were, for the most part, young people of 15 and 16 years. Hundreds of demonstrators were arrested. A large number were condemned by the Special Courts to heavy prison sentences.

N.B. Three weeks after the powerful demonstrations not only in Casablanca but also in Rabat, Fez and Marrakech, the people's movement, with the proclamation of a general amnesty, had won its point against the reactionary forces that had unleashed the repression.

Easter Peace Marches

This year, as in preceding years in European countries, there were numerous Easter Marches which have become traditional demonstrations for peace, disarmament and protest against the atomic danger. Women participated in great numbers in these marches in which some tens of thousands of people took part. Our photo shows women in the German Federal Republic, discussing the posters the participants carried in the march. On one appears the slogan "Armament costs us money. War costs us our lives."

▪ New Family Code in the German Democratic Republic

A new family code has recently been submitted to public discussion in the G.D.R. The aim of this code is to put into practice the principles of a new family law.

The Draft Bill particularly stresses the equality of the partners as the basic characteristic of the family. It recognises the right of both spouses to develop their abilities, but also places on them the duty of respecting and supporting the interests and abilities of each other. Accent is also placed on the growing importance of education in the family and the close cooperation and mutual confidence which must exist between parents and educational institutions.

Constantina Perez arrested once again! An end to Franco repression!

On March 28 a conference for solidarity with the Spanish people who are victims of repression, took place in London. 300 delegates from 14 countries of Europe, representing various organisations and well-known personalities took part. Angela Grimau greeted the Conference and demanded a review of her husband's trial, the hero Julian Grimau. In its resolutions, the Conference protested against the fascist terror in Spain, demanded the restoration of democratic freedoms and called on the governments of other countries to use pressure on the Spanish authorities for the liberation of political prisoners. Our photo shows four personalities present in London: Mrs. Rodano, Vice-President of the Italian Chamber of Deputies, Mr. Stanley Mayne and John Mendelson, M.P.s of Great Britain and Mr. Jules Moch, French Deputy.

The arrest at the end of March of Constantina Perez and her daughter proves once again the urgency of the demands raised by the Conference. Constantina Perez was arrested before, in August 1963 (see WWW, No. 3, 1964) following the campaign of protest and solidarity that took place both in Spain and abroad. In a telegram to the Franco authorities the WIDF demanded her freedom and that of her daughter.

(Continued on page 10)

★★★ HE

This drawing was signed by Michel Politzer, whose mother, Maie Politzer, was in the first convoy of French women deportees leaving Fort Romainville. Like Danielle Casanova, like thousands of others, she never returned. She died at Auschwitz. Michel was barely 10. His father, Professor Georges Politzer, had just been shot. He has a very vague memory of his mother . . . guessing that she was amongst the prisoners who waved their hands to greet their children, he could just make her out that Sunday on the road leading from the Fort. It was their greeting, their kiss.

ROINES ★★★

Their numbers are legion. Women whose names are known throughout the world, and a much larger number of anonymous heroines who fought against fascism. Some of them fought, arms in hand, or cared for the wounded or the sick, others contributed to victory by replacing men in the factories and the fields, still others in the rear of the enemy, called for Resistance, distributed leaflets, helped those who were suffering or threatened, sabotaged war production. How many of them were deported by the fascists to their concentration camps where they met a horrible death . . .

Today also, millions of women, known and unknown, continue to fight with self-denial, against war and fascism, against atomic danger and the destruction of humanity. We dedicate these lines to all of them.

In all countries where resistance and armed struggle against fascism developed, women were part of the armies of liberation and partisan unity. The sufferings inflicted on their people, their families and children, drove them into becoming soldiers, members of supporting services, of military medical units, liaison agents. Many of them gave their lives for the freedom of their country.

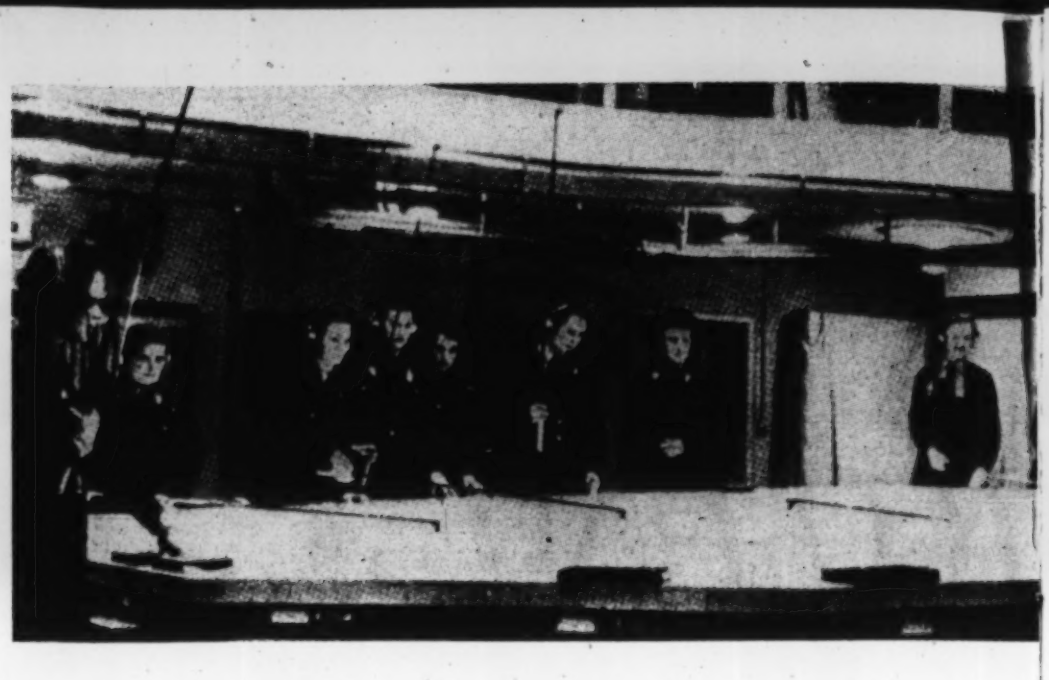
Constantin Simonov, war correspondent, reported in his Diary:

"I particularly noticed a slight little woman, a surgeon, among them. All the rest treated her with obvious respect and affection. She spoke as if everything had been succession of things it had been impossible not to do: after qualifying at a dentistry school she was asked to join the army, so she did; and then the war broke out, and she went along with everybody; and then nobody came for dental treatment, so she did duty as a nurse — she couldn't do nothing, after all. And then the surgeon was killed and she took over as surgeon — there was nobody else to do it. Well, and then the wounded were screaming out there, and the orderly hed been killed and there was nobody to bring them in, so she crawled out and did it. And while she was doing it, a German came at her with a tommy-gun, so she picked up her pistol in both hands, because it was so heavy, and shot him. All this interspered with memories of her husband, of whom she said, wih a shame-faced look, that he wasn't in the army, as if it were her fault. And of her baby, whom she called Lialka, though it was strange to think she had a baby, she was so tiny herself."

In Yugoslavia one hundred thousand women fought in the ranks of the partisans and the liberation army, and over two million took part in the illegal struggle in the occupied regions. It was this way in all the European countries invaded by hitlerite fascists.
In Asia the Chinese women wrote glorious pages in the history of the struggle of their people against the Japanese fascist aggressors. In other countries, invaded or threatened by Japan, in Mongolia, Korea, Vietnam, Laos, Cambodia, Burma, Malaya, Indonesia, India and Australia, the women also contributed to its defeat at the cost of heavy sacrifices.

What courage, what heroism women gave proof of in the resistance, assuring liaison, distributing leaflets, putting up posters, participating in sabotage, constantly risking their lives if they were discovered. In spite of all threats they slowed down at work, produced as many rejects as possible, helped to sabotage war industry or transport. Thus in 1954

Women took part in the war effort to beat hitler fascism in the most varied spheres: in agricultural production as these Soviet farm women, work in industry, the manufacture of armaments, in the armed struggle as these Slovak partisans, in anti-aircraft defence as these British women.



With hereoism and firmness women made their contribution to the resistance movements in the regions occupied by the nazis. Here we see women's defence groups in Italy.

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the anti-fascist women of different nationalities, held in Ravensbruck and working in the Siemens factories, were able to render unusable 30,000 special spindles urgently needed by the fascists.

*

The following letters were written by heroines of the resistance a few hours before their execution:

"My dear mummy,
It is difficult to write these last few words to you. All memories awaken and the most beautiful of them give me terrible suffering. Lately I have to say to myself constantly 'courage, don't let yourself be borne down by sorrow.'
"Be courageous dear mother, I will also try to be with all my strength,

Your,
Anka."
(ANNA MLEJNKOVA, 29 years old, executed in Prague, May 12, 1944)

"Dear Mimma,
Your mother is leaving, thinking of you and loving you, my dear one. Be good. Study and always obey your uncles who are bringing you up. Love them as though they were myself. I am quite at peace. You must say to all our dear relatives, to your grandmother and all the others, that they should forgive me for the pain that I caused them. You must not cry for me nor be ashamed of me. When you are older you will understand better.
"I kiss you and all the others.
"I ask only one thing of you: study. I will protect you from heaven.

Your unhappy mother
PAOLA GARELLI (Mirka)"
(28 years old. Shot in Savona (Italy) November 1, 1944, without trial.)

"Mumma, dear Mumma,
"It will soon be time to say goodbye forever. The worst is over, separation from my little Hans. What happiness he has given me. I know him to be well taken care of in your faithful hands. Promise me, dear mother, to be courageous for him. I know that your heart is near breaking, but hold it firmly in both hands. You will succeed, as you have always succeeded in overcoming suffering. Won't you mother?
"Soon I will go and see my big Hans. My little Hans has, I hope, inherited what was best in both of us. Every time you hold him close, you child will be close to you, much closer than I can be at this moment.
"Mumma, my only mumma, my dear little Hans, all my love will go with you constantly. Be courageous as I wish to be myself.

Always, your daughter,
(HILDE COPPI, 34 years old, hung August 5, 1943, in Berlin Plotzensee, Her husband, Hans Coppi, had been executed December 22, 1942.

*

Even in the frightful conditions of concentration camps, women had the strength to continue resisting the fascist terror and struggle for a quick end to the war. In spite of the ever present death, they were able to maintain their human dignity although the fascists had even denied them the right of bearing a name.

In Auschwitz concentration camp, many women, forced to work in special work groups, nevertheless still gathered important information which they passed on at the risk of their lives, to the illegal organisation in the camp.

On January 6, 1945, a short time before the liberation of the camp, four young Polish women were executed. In 1939 they had been confined to the ghetto. In 1942—43 their parents, brothers and sisters, deported to Auschwitz, had been put through the gas chambers. They themselves, assigned to work in the powder plant, organised in Auschwitz by the UNION enterprise (Krupp section) supplied gunpowder to the resistance organisation and were denounced by a spy. An old inmate wrote of one of them: "At night, in the 'bunker' we found ourselves face to face with a girl of about 20. She shamed us as we tried to encourage her, for she herself was trying to arouse our militancy. She stated that she was proud of having taken part in the resistance, and she could die in peace. We have rarely been so upset in saying goodbye to a comrade. The next day they were hung during the rollcall in the women's camp. One of them cried: 'We will be avenged!'"

The second World War (1939–1945) caused 54,800,000 deaths

Soviet Union	20,300,000
Asia	13,600,000
Germany	6,600,000
Other European countries	11,060,000
America	229,000
Missing	3,000,000

(figures taken from "Dictionary of Diplomacy")

*** HEROINES ***

And those who, under cover, fed war prisoners or helped them escape, risking their lives and those of their families, are they not also heroines? We must not forget the name of Louise Jould, who lived in the English island of Jersey occupied by the fascists, for having helped war prisoners. She was put to death in the gas chamber of Ravensbruck.

Also in the small city of Us, near Bergen in Norway, a woman, Maria Estrom, devoted herself to helping war prisoners from 1942 to 1945. Defying the fascist threats which punished all such aid with the death sentence, Maria always found new ways of supplying food to the prisoners.

The immense sufferings of mothers

The sufferings of children were tremendous. Uncountable are those who lost their parents in bombing raids, who wandered amongst the ruins, died of hunger or were caught up in the hell of battle. In a small showcase in the memorial museum at the former women's concentration camp of Ravensbruck, there is a simple black notebook. Its pages are filled with the names of 860 French, Soviet, Polish, Dutch and German children born in the camp. Most of them died of cold and hunger, or were done away with a few days after their birth. An infinitesimal number survived. Coatless, bare-footed, they remained standing under the rain, wind and snow or the burning sun for the long hours that the roll-call lasted. The SS beat them, stamped on them. Many were exterminated in the gas chambers.

The inmates were particularly concerned with the children. They organised sponsor-groups, gathered all that could serve the children, donated from their meagre rations to feed the little ones. Attemps were made to save the children and women threatened with the gas chamber by hiding them, at the cost of great difficulties and serious risks. How many mothers keep before their eyes the image of the horrifying moment when a man, wearing the emblem of the death's head, took her children away, whom she was never to see again.

To the wounds war caused women, no new ones must be added. Our eyes fill with tears when we think of the sufferings that war has brought. It took away four sons and a daughter of Varvara Tigankova: "My Vanya fell at Babi Yar. He was killed near Koursk. Gricha on the Kalinen front. Masha found death near Minsk. Kostya fell in the battle of Konigsburg. All my children fought bravely to free their country and defeat the enemy. And believe me ... each one of them fought so that there would never again be war in the world."

The heroism shown by these women in the struggle for a world free from fascism and war today presents us with the duty to fight with all our strength, to assure peace in the world.

In Europe alone war killed two million children. It deprived millions of others, who never had a childhood, from the protection of their parents, left them hungry and without shelter.

news in brief

(Continued from page 5)

50 miles — Selma-Montgomery

Slavery was abolished in the United States of America over one hundred years ago by President Lincoln, but Negro citizens are still often deprived of their basic human rights.

The 20 million Negroes of the United States represent about 10% of the population, but in Congress and responsible positions in the administration and the army, their number is infinitesimally small. The proportion of Negroes among engineers is only 0.5% while among sweepers and unskilled labourers it is 90%.

The majority of Negroes, especially in the South, do not enjoy civil rights because of the opposition of the racists.

Half of the Negro families merely exist. Dr. Martin Luther King believes that, to truly improve conditions of life of large sections of the Negro population, the Government would have to devote 1.5 million dollars a day to this purpose, which is equivalent to the United States expenditures in the Vietnam war.

Today the Negro population is advancing in an irresistible movement for its rights — especially its civil rights — against misery. No racists threat or terror will stop this movement.

Since Spring 1963 numerous demonstrations of protest have taken place against the racist violence in which hundreds of thousands of American citizens participated, both white and black.

The 5-day March for Negro civil rights, which took place March 21 to 25 in Alabama (our photo) was one of the most important activities of the last period. It took place over some 50 miles from Selma — where on March 7, the most incredible police violence was used against civil rights demonstrators at the orders of racist Governor Wallace of Alabama — to Montgomery, the State capital. It ended with a meeting which was attended by 30,000 persons in front of the Capitol. Great solidarity for the struggle of the American Negroes and powerful protests against racist violence was shown by honest people of the United States and throughout the world.

The Women's International Democratic Federation has warmly greeted the great Selma-Montgomery March and proclaimed its solidarity with the

fighters for civil rights. It also expressed its deep indignation at the vile murder of Mrs. Viola Gregg Luizo, a courageous anti-segregationist from Detriot, by racists. She is the mother of five children (our photo) and came to Alabama to participate in the March. The WIDF has wired its condolences to the family.

For the first time since the independence of Algeria, March 8

On March 8, 1965, in unity with women of the whole world, the women of Algeria (our photo) demonstrated publicly, for the first time since independence, their desire to unite, mobilise and face up to their responsibilities. At the appeal of the National Union of Algerian Women, meetings attended by many thousands of women took place throughout the country and in Algiers President Ben Bella presided.

After having paraded in the city's streets, carrying banners which bore slogans expressing their desires, they took part in a meeting during which the need to free women through work, to tirelessly demand peace in the world and to give effective solidarity with peoples struggling for their national independence, were stressed.

The Algiers Charter proclaims the equality of men and women but this principle must become a fact in life and the March 8 demonstrations are an important stage on the way to the collective awareness, not only by women alone, but also by the Algerian population as a whole.

By his presence and speech President Ben Bella wished to underline the importance he attaches to women's participation in the life of the country. "I am convinced," he said in his speech, "that your rights will never be willingly granted you by men. It is through your struggle that you will achieve them. Some fear women obtaining their full rights. As for us, if we fear anything, it is to see women remain stationary and stagnate." He added: "Algerian women must in the first place know how to mobilise and organise. They will only enjoy their rights if they are able to tackle them with a spirit of responsibility."

For the first time on March 7, 200 working women met at the People's House at the call of the NUAW and the General Union of Algerian Workers to prepare the thesis for the 2nd Congress of the GUAW to be held on March 23 in Algiers. The resolutions adopted there demanded the participation and contribution of women to this Congress, their participation in the economic development of the country, especially in the worker-managed sector. Also, the beginning of June in Algiers, a Second Conference of Afro-Asian Women will take place. Serious preparation and new activities will make this a demonstration full of hope.

In participating in the GUAW Congress, and effectively preparing the Afro-Asian Women's Conference, the Algerian women are showing that they feel concerned with all national and international events, and the importance of the March 8 meetings is a proof of the powerful support of women to these liberating efforts.

THE FATE OF A MAN

by MIKHAIL SHOLOKOV

The story opens with the author meeting Sokolov, the hero, with his little adopted son, Vanya, while waiting for a boat to take them across a flooded river. It is early spring. The first year after the war.
They smoke together in silence for a while.

Then ... "Sokolov rested his big hands on his knees and let his shoulders droop. When I glanced at him sideways I felt strangely disturbed. Have you ever seen eyes that look as if they've been sprinkled with ash, eyes filled with such ingrained yearning and sadness that it is hard to look into them ..."
Gradually Sokolov told this sympathic stranger the story behind these eyes.

Before the war he had had a dearly beloved wife, and three children. All three did well at school, and the eldest, Anatoly, was brilliant at mathematics. Sokolov was mighty proud of him. They had built themselves a small cottage, unfortunately not far from an aircraft factory.

Then came the war. His call-up papers came on the second day. His family saw him off at the station. "I tore myself away from Irina, took her face in my hands, and kissed her, and her lips were like ice ... The train started off very early and it took me past my family again. I could see my poor little orphaned kids, bunched up together, waving their hands and trying to smile, but not managing it. And Irina had her hands clasped to her breast, her lips as white as chalk, and she was whispering something, and staring, and her body was all bent forward as if she was trying to walk against a strong wind.

And that's how I will see her in my memory for the rest of life ..."

Sokolov becomes a prisoner of war. After being herded about for two years to work all over Germany, he was finally sent to a prisoner of war camp near Dresden, to work in a stone quarry. Four cubic metres per day per man was the stint. Two months later, out of the one hundred and forty-two in Sokolov's group, only forty-two were still alive.

"... One evening we came back to our hut from work. It had been raining all day and our rags were soaking, we were all shivering from the cold wind and couldn't stop out teeth chattering. There wasn't anywhere to get dry or warm, and we were as hungry as death itself, or even worse. But we were never given any food in the evenings. Well I took off my wet rags. Threw them onto my bunk and said: 'They want you to do four cubic metres a day but one cubic metre would be plenty to bury one of us' That was all I said, but, would you believe it, there was among our own fellows one dirty dog who went and reported my bitter words to the camp commandant ...

"Well, the day after I said that the commandant had me up on the mat. In the evening an interpreter and two guards came to our hut. 'Sokolov Andrei?' I answered. 'Follow us, quick march, the Commandant himself wants to see you.' I guessed what he wanted me for. To finish me off. So I said goodbye to my pals, they all knew I was going to my death, took a deep breath and followed the guards. I went across the camp yard, looked up at the stars and said goodbye to them, and I thought to myself: Well, you've had your full dose of torture, Andrei Sokolov, number 331. I felt somehow sorry for Irina and the kids, then I got over it and began screwing up my courage to face the barrel of that pistol without flinching, like a soldier should, so the enemy wouldn't see how hard it'd be for me, at the last minute, to part with this life ...

"In the commandant's room there were flowers on the window-sill and it was clean and nice as it is in our clubs at home. At the table there were all the camp officers. Five of 'em, sitting there, downing schnapps and chewing bacon fat. On the table there was a big opened bottle, bread, bacon fat, soused apples, all kinds of opened tins. I took one glance at all that grub, and you wouldn't believe it, but I felt so sick I nearly vomited. I was hungry as a wolf, you see, and I'd forgotten what the sight of human food was like, and now there was all this stuff in front of me. Somehow I kept my sickness down, but it cost me a great effort to tear my eyes from that table.

"Right in front of me sat Muller, the commandant, half drunk, flicking his pistol from one hand to the other, playing with it, and he'd got his eye fixed on me like a snake. Well, I stood at attention, snapped my broken down heels together, and reported in a loud voice like this: "Prisoner-of-war Andrei Sokolov at your service. Herr Kommandant.' And he says to me: 'Well, you Russian Ivan, four cubic metres of quarrying is too much for you, is it?' 'Yes, Herr Kommandant, quite enough and to spare.'

"He gets up and says: 'I shall do you a great honour, I shall now shoot you in person for those words. It will make a mess here, so come into the yard, you can sign off there.' 'As you like,' I told him. He stood thinking for a moment, then tossed his pistol on the table and poured out a full glass of schnapps, took a piece of bread, put a slice of fat on it, held the lot out to me, and says: 'Before you die, Russian Ivan, drink to the triumph of German arms.'

"I was about to take the glass and the bread out of his hand, but when I heard those words, something seemed to burn me inside. Me, a Russian soldier I thought, to drink to the victory of German arms?" What'll you want next, Herr Kommandant? You can go to hell with your schnapps!

"I put the glass down on the table, and the bread with it, and I said: 'Thank you for your hospitality but I don't drink.' He smiles. 'So, you don't drink to our victory? In that case, drink to your own death,' What had I got to lose? 'To my death, and to my release from torment then,' I said, And with that, I took the glass and poured it down my throat in two gulps. But I didn't touch the bread. I just wiped my lips politely with my hand and said: 'Thank you for your hospitality. I am ready. Herr Kommandant, you can sign me off now.'

"But he was looking at me sharply and he says: 'Have a bite to eat before you die.' So I says to him: 'I never eat after the first glass.' He poured out a second and handed it to me. I drank the second and again I didn't touch the food, I was staking everything on courage, you see. Anyway, I thought I'll get drunk before I go out into that yard to die.

And the commandant's fair eyebrows shot up in the air. 'Why don't you eat Russian Ivan? Don't be shy!' But I stuck to my guns: 'Excuse me, Herr Kommandant, but I don't eat after the second glass either.' He puffed up his cheeks and snorted, and then he gave such a roar of laughter, and while he laughed he said something quickly in German, must have been translating my words to his friends. The others laughed too, pushed their chairs back, turned their big mugs round to look at me, and I noticed something different in their looks, something a bit softer like.

"The commandant poured me out a third glass and his hands were shaking with laughter. I drank that glass slowly, bit off a little bit of bread, and put the rest down on the table. I wanted to show the bastards that even though I was half dead with hunger I wasn't going to choke myself with the scraps they flung me, that I had my own, Russian dignity and pride, and that they hadn't turned me into an animal as they had wanted to.

"After that the commandant got a serious look on his face, straightened the two iron crosses on his chest, came from behind the table unarmed and said: 'Look here, Sokolov, you're a real Russian soldier. You're a fine soldier. I am a soldier too, and I respect a worthy enemy. I shall not shoot you. What is more, today our gallant armies have reached the Volga and taken complete possession of Stalingrad. That is great joy for us, and therefore I graciously grand you your life. Go back to your block and take this with you for your courage.' And he handed me a smallish loaf of bread from the table, and a lump of bacon fat.

"I gripped that bread to my chest tight as I could, and picked up the fat in my left hand, and I was so taken aback at this unexpected turn of events that I didn't even say thank you, just did a left-about turn, and went to the door. And all the while I was thinking, now he'll blast the daylight through my shoulder blades and I'll never get this grub back to the lads. But no, nothing happened. Again death passed me by and I only felt the cold breath of it.

"I got out of the commandant's room without a stagger, but outside I went reeling all over the place. I lurched into the hut and pitched down on the cement floor, unconscious. The lads woke me up when it was still dark: 'Tell us what happened!' Then I remembered what had happened at the commandant's and told them. 'How are we going to share out the grub', the man in the bunk next to me asked. 'Equal share all round,' I told him. We waited until it got light. We cut up the bread and fat with a thread. Each of us got a lump of bread about the size of a match-bax, and as for the fat, well, of course, there was only enough to grease your lips with, but we shared it out fair for all." ...

Towards the end of the war Sokolov is made use of to drive a German major about. He finally succeeds in making his escape back to his own lines, taking the major with him as a prisoner. He is put into hospital to recover from the shocking deprivations he has undergone ...

... "As soon as I got into hospital I wrote Irina a letter ...

"For a couple of weeks I just slept and ate. They fed me a little at a time, but often. If they'd given me all the food I wanted, I might have gone under. But after a couple of weeks, I couldn't look at food. There was no reply from home, and I must admit, I began to get mopey. Could'nt think of eating, sleep would'nt come to me, and all kinds of bad thoughts kept creeping into my head. In the third week I got a letter from Voronezh. But it was'nt from Irina, it was from a neighbour of mine, a joiner. I would'nt wish anyone to get a letter like that. He wrote that the Germans had bombed the aircraft factory, and one heavy bomb had fallen plumb on my cottage. Irina and the girls were at home when it dropped ... Well he wrote that they did'nt find a trace of them, and there was only a deep crater where the house had been ...

"... When my heart eased up and I heard the blood rushing in my ears, I remembered how Irina had clung to me when we parted at the station. That women's heart of hers must have known all along we were not to see each other again in this world ... Once I had had a family, a home of my own, it had all taken years to build and it was all destroyed in a flash, and I was left all alone. It must be a dream, I thought, this messed-up life of mine. Why, when I became a prisoner, nearly every night, under my breath of course, I had talked to Irina and the kids, tried to cheer them up by telling them I'd come home and they need'nt grieve; I'm tough, I said, I can stand it, we'll be together again one day. So for two years I had been talking to the dead ..."

The only remaining member of Sokolov's family, his son Anatoly, had become a captain in the artillery. Sokolov used to dream at nights how his son would get married and he would live with them. Do a bit of carpentry and look after the children. But even that he lost. Anatoly was killed by a sniper's bullet on the outskirts of Berlin.

Demobilised at the end of the war, Sokolov did'nt know where to go. He would'nt go back to his native Voronezh. Then he remembered a friend who lived in Uruypinsk, who had once asked him to go and live with him ... He went.

"My friend and his wife had no children and they had their own cottage on the edge of the town. He got a disability pension, but he worked as a driver in a lorry depot and I got a job there too. I settled with my friend and they gave me a home. We used to drive various loads about the suburbs and in the autumn we switched over to grain delivery work. It was then I got to know my new son, the one that's playing down there in the sand.

"First thing you'd do when you got back from a long trip would be to go to cafe for a bite of something, and of course, you'd put away a glass of vodka to get rid of your tiredness. I had quite a liking for that harmful habit by that time, I must admit. And one day I noticed this lad near the cafe, and the next day I noticed him again. What a little ragamuffin he was! His face all smeared with watermelon juice and dust, dirty as anything, hair all over the place, but he'd got a pair of eyes like stars at night after it's been raining! And I felt so fond of him that, funny though it may seem, I started missing him, and I'd hurry to finish my run so I could get back to the cafe and see him sooner. That's where he got his food — he ate what people gave him.

"The fourth day I came in straight from the state farm with my lorry loaded with grain and pulled in at the cafe. There was my little fellow sitting on the steps, kicking his legs, and pretty hungry by the look of him. I poked my head out of the window and shouted to him: 'Hi, Vanya! Come on, jump aboard, I'll take you to the elevator, and then we'll come back here and have some dinner,' My shout made him start, then he jumped straight from the steps on to the running board and pulled himself up to the window. 'How do you know my name's Vanya?' he says quietly, and he opens those starry eyes of his wide, waiting for my answer. Well, I told him I was just one of those chaps who know everything.

"He came round to the right side, I opened the door and let him in beside me, and off we went. Lively little fellow he was, but suddenly he got quiet, and from time to time gave me

a look from under those long curly eyelashes of his, and sighed. Such a little fellow and he'd already learned to sigh. Was that the thing for him to be doing? 'Where's your father, Vanya?' I asked. 'He was killed at the front,' he whispered. 'And Mummy?' 'Mummy was killed by a bomb when we were in the train.' 'Where were you coming from in the train?' 'I don't know, I don't remember ...' 'And haven't you got any family at all?' 'No, nobody,' 'But where do you sleep at night?' 'Anywhere I can find.'

"I felt the hot tears welling up in my throat and I made up my mind at once. Why should we suffer alone and separate like this? I'd take him in as my own son. And straightaway I felt easier in my mind and there was a sort of brightness there. I leaned over to him and asked very quiet like: 'Vanya, do you know who I am?' And he just breathed it out: 'Who?' And still as quiet, I says to him: 'I'm your father.'

"Lord alive, what happened then! He threw his arms round my neck, he kissed my cheeks, my lips, my forehead, and started chirping like a singing bird: 'Daddy dear! I knew it! I knew you'd find me! I knew you'd find me whatever happened! I've been waiting so long for you to find me!' He pressed himself to me and he was trembling all over, like a blade of grass in the wind. My eyes were misty, and I was trembling too, and my hands were shaking ... How I managed to keep hold of the wheel I don't know. Even so I put her in the ditch and stopped the engine. While my eyes were so misty I was afraid to go in case I knocked someone down. We sat there for about five minutes and my little son was still clinging to me for all he was worth, and not saying anything, just trembling. I put my right arm round him, hugged him gently, and turned the lorry round with my left hand and drove back to the cottage where I lived. I couldn't think about going to the elevator after that.

"I left the lorry at the gate, took my new son in my arms and carried him into the house. And he got his little arms round my neck and hung on tight. He pressed his cheek to my unshaven chin and stuck there. And that's

(Continued on page 23)

remember...

It is sometimes difficult for an unknowing visitor to realise the terrible effects of five years of war on the cities we shall describe here. They have bandaged their wounds, been rebuilt, have become re-inhabited.

They were subjected to every particularly odious aspect of fascist barbarism, offering it a resistance which has become legendary. Because of this they have become symbolic of the thousands of martyred towns and villages and heroes of countries attacked by the Hitler aggressors and their allies.

The martyred city of KRAGUJEVAC was one of many: ORADOUR, MARZABOTTO, LIDICE, to name but a few. Throughout the world, as an honour and warning, these names have been bestowed on streets, parks, gardens, working class quarters, ports, etc.

In ROTTERDAM, COVENTRY, WARSAW, cities have sprung up from the ashes, on the ruins soaked with the blood of thousands of innocent victims of nazi cruelty.

LENINGRAD! Almost a million of Hitler's troops, equipped with the most modern arms, were thrown into an assault on the city. Its three million inhabitants remained completely surrounded from the very first attacks and were subjected to frightful bombardment from land, sea and air. But in spite of hunger, cold, disease, Leningrad held firm for 900 days.

PARIS and ATHENS also tell of the resistance of other peoples to fascist occupation.

Then there are DRESDEN, HIROSHIMA, – two great cities uselessly destroyed when the end of the war, the defeat of fascism, was already assured. They are examples of the fact that in the end, war strikes back at the countries from which it was launched.

Today, life is flowering anew in all these places. But in Hiroshima today, young people who were exposed to atomic radiation are dying from it, 20 years later, giving us a glimpse of what a third world conflict would be with thousands and thousands of Hiroshimas . . .

May the history of these cities stimulate people to act so that such atrocities will never again be repeated, so that life, which was reborn thanks to the heroic resistance of peoples, can triumph, so that a world catastrophe, which would not spare the aggressor this time either, can be prevented.

The ROTTERDAM "misunderstanding"...

The 'misunderstanding' and its instigator Trettner, who was also responsible for the destruction of Guernica and Florence, in his present role of Inspector General of the West German Army.

Visitors to Rotterdam are always impressed by the modern and lively atmosphere of this city with its world port on the Meuse.

The invasion of the Netherlands by the German troops began on May 10, 1940, and met with the resistance of the Dutch who fought heroically, but with unequal strength, against the aggressor. Hitler's troops thought they could "conquer" the Netherlands in a few hours. Violent battles took place, especially for control of bridges. The "Waalhaven" airport and a part of the city of Rotterdam was already in the hands of German troops. In the western part of the country German planes were dropping parachute troops. Continuous alert alarms drove the population into concrete shelters.

Tuesday May 14 at 10.30 a. m., the nazis threatened to take "more serious measures" against the city if it did not capitulate by 2 o'clock in the afternoon. In case of refusal Rotterdam, a city with a very dense population and no anti-aircraft defence, would be bombed. The Commander-in-Chief of the Netherland armed forces decided to open negotiations to have Rotterdam declared an open city. Following which, about 1.30 p.m., a new ultimatum was presented, demanding the surrender of the city by 4.30 p.m. While the Netherlands negotiators were returning to Rotterdam, to report this result, the air attack began shortly after 1.30 p.m. This criminal attack was directed by General Heinz Trettner — now Head of the Army of the German Federal Republic — and reduced the centre of Rotterdam to a mass of flames in a few minutes. The fire burned intensely for days and that is why it was never possible to determine the exact number of victims. Thousands were burned alive. Innumerable persons were wounded and tens of thousands lost their homes and all they owned. 26.000 houses in the city, 13 hospitals and 24 churches were destroyed.

In 1964 General Trettner stated that the bombing of Rotterdam "was fully justified" from the military point of view and by international law; if the air force dumped its murderous load on the city while the Netherlands negotiators were returning to Rotterdam with the new ultimatum, it was a result of a "misunderstanding" ...

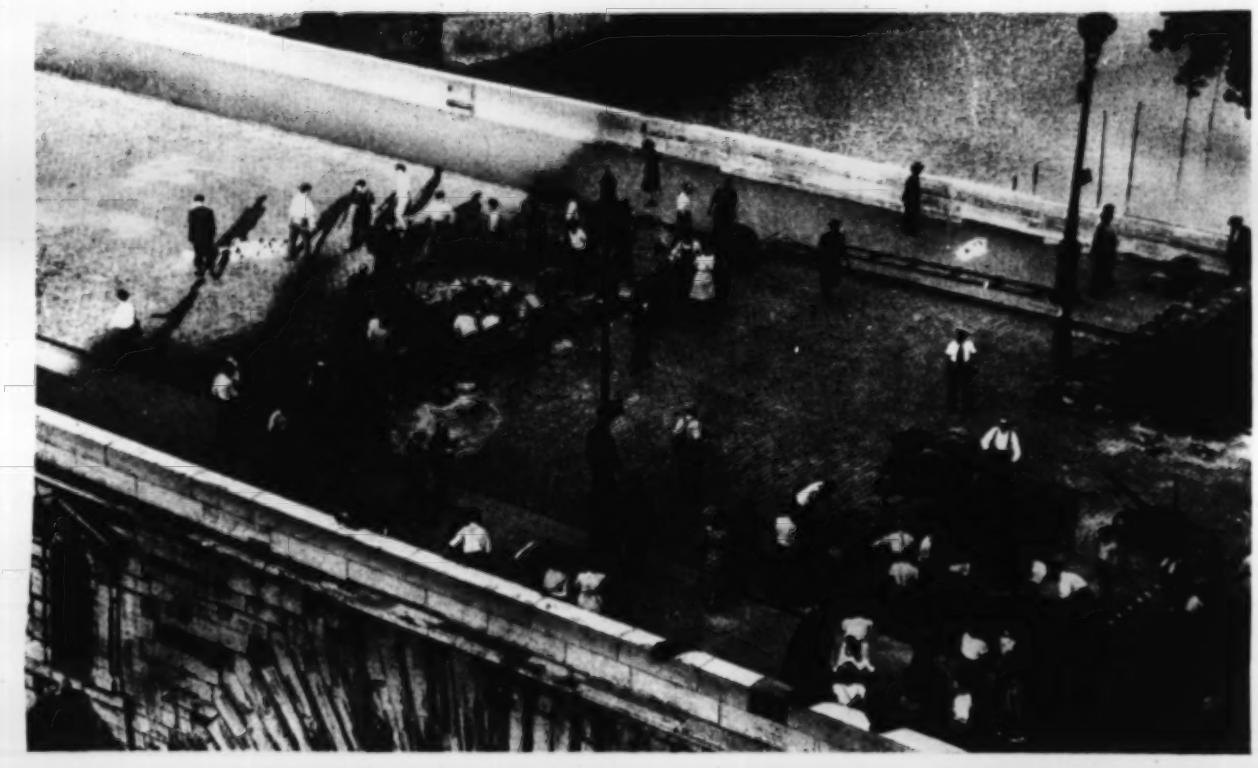
The story of a survivor

"When the air attack took place we lived in the centre of the city. Thus we lived through it from beginning to end. When we look back on it it seems like a nightmare.
"When the bombing began we were in a shelter with women and children from neighboring houses. It was as dark as the inside of a sealed barrel as the lights had gone out. Women and children were crying and calling for their children and parents. My husband could not stand this any longer and went out to see what was happening. He returned immediately crying 'Quick! Everybody out or you will all burn! There is fire everywhere!'
"At first the shelter warden would not let us out, but we went out just the same. Everyone who remained in the shelter died there.
"Once outside we did not know where to go. There was fire all about us. Curtains and clothing were scattered in the street and burning. My husband's clothes started to burn and we had to smother the flames.
"A tank with Dutch soldiers was picking up women and children and taking them out of the city. The men had to try and save themselves as best they could. Everywhere broken glass from shattered windows covered the ground.
"Smoke and that frightful smell ...
"I shall never forget it!" *MEVR. BRUINSNAARD*

Rotterdam: this statue by sculptor Zadkine against the background of the great Netherlands port reminds us that the city was rebuilt on the rubble left by the war.

re mem ber...

On August 25, 1944, General von Choltitz surrendered to General Leclerc and Colonel Rol-Tanguy. The latter had led the insurrection of the people of Paris, which prevented von Choltitz from carrying out his order to destroy the city.



August 1944: the inhabitants of Paris build barricades on Sully bridge.

Appeal to the population of Paris to fight for liberation.

LE COMITE D'ACTION MILITAIRE DU CONSEIL NATIONAL
DE LA RESISTANCE ET L'ETAT-MAJOR DES F. F. I.

A LA

POPULATION

PARISIENNE

Les troupes alliées sont à proximité de Paris.

L'ennemi traque bat en retraite avec les débris d'unités démoralisées.

Les F. F. I. de la Région Parisienne [illegible] ment battues suivant l'exemple de la France entière.

L'heure est venue de chasser définitivement l'ennemi de la capitale.

Pour cela la population parisienne tout entière doit se soulever, dresser des barricades et passant hardiment à l'action en tête avec l'envahisseur.

L'heure de la libération définitive sonne.

FRANÇAIS, DEBOUT !
TOUS AU COMBAT...

PARIS! You will liberate yourself!

You will free yourself from weariness
[and mud
Brothers let us be courageous
We who are not hatted
Nor booted nor gloved nor well
[brought up
A fire is kindled in our veins
We once again see the light
The best of us have died for us
and now their blood is flowing into our
[hearts
and it is once again morning, a Paris
[morning ...

PAUL ELUARD – "COURAGE"

To revenge our sisters fallen in the struggle and speed up the liberation of all women – those in the camps, those of the cities and villages who were still under the heavy hand of the occupation – were the reasons dictating all the activities of the patriots during those months of July and August 1944.

At the July 14, 1944 celebrations (1), in answer to the appeals and orders of the Parisian Committee of Liberation (CPL) patriots coming from underground went down into the streets of the working class districts and headed towards the centre of Paris. In the 14th district, at Vanves Gate, the women from the tenements where mostly workers lived, burned effigies of Hitler.

On August 10 the railroad workers' strike paralysed traffic and the transportation of enemy soldiers and arms. The morning of Tuesday August 15, the Paris police went on strike. Gas. electricity and water stopped. On this same August 15, in the afternoon, we had had a rendezvous with one of the leaders of the insurrection. The rendezvous took place in the suburbs, on the banks of the Marne, one of the rivers flowing into the Seine.

When the time to leave came and it was a question of deciding on another date for the next meeting, the answer was brief and clear: "No rendezvous – in a few hours it will be open battle. Either we will meet easily, free men ... or else ... Au revoir and keep your spirits up."

A note reached us the next morning *"On Friday the 18th be in the laboratory of one of the great Parisian hospitals at 4 p.m."*

There I recognized Joliot-Curie, bearer of a message, only one sentence of which I remembered: "Insurrection to-morrow!" To-morrow? Was it possible?

That very night we had to work fast as time was short and "tomorrow" was less than 24 hours away!

Posters! Leaflets! Appeals! We had to see to everything, do everything, distribute everything. Contact our liaison agents, alert the heads of regions, districts, quarters and households!

It was a short and fruitful night's work! After a brief nap in the early morning hours we were wakened by a shout in the courtyard: "The tricolor flag is flying on the Place de la Bastille!" The whole house stirs and I am down in the street at once.

Barricades are already going up ...

Yes! The flag is flying, raised by patriots ...

Place de la Nation. We read the appeal drawn up 8 hours before the insurrection and signed by Colonel Rol-Tanguy, Chief of the Region: "Understand fully the principle that success is a result of large numbers, and therefore massive recruiting must be undertaken immediately ..."

It is still night and in the light of smoking candles we prepare our appeals to help the insurrection: "Take part in building the barricades" – "Bring the sandbags from the roofs to the streets" – "Organise the supplies for the fighters ..."

At dawn we roll along on bicycles, loaded down with leaflets ...

On the left bank, where shortly the tanks of the allied armies will be advancing, fighting is going on. "Tiger" type tanks are patrolling the Latin Quarter and vainly trying to retake the neighboring Police Station. There is fighting in the Gobelins and around the town hall of the 13th district. At any cost we have to get through between these two points, and we get through, in showers of flying glass, splintering trees and whistling bullets.

The afternoon of the 20th, rumors of a truce circulate. Some would willingly have accepted it, but the very thought of it makes us clench our fists.

The town halls of the Paris suburbs are already in the hands of the patriots.

In every quarter of the capital, in every community in the suburbs, the women answered the appeals made. We know many of them. But there were innumerable women who took part in every form of fighting and whose individual heroism will never be known, or only much later.

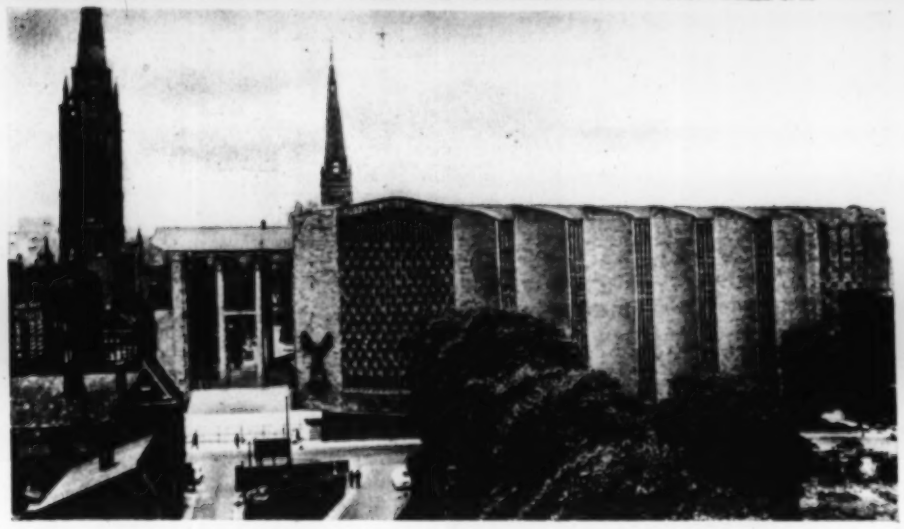
At the Parisian Liberation Committee women were given many posts. In the town halls women, in almost all districts, became proto-mayors.

MARIA RABATE

(1) national holiday

COVENTRY...

Coventry after an air raid.



The rebuilt cathedral. On the left the spire and ruins of the old gothic cathedral destroyed by German bombs.

"We will raze their cities"

It is the second year of the war. The strident voice of Goebbels – Hitler's chief of propaganda – is heard in the Sport Palace in Berlin announcing to a fearful world: "We will rase their cities!" After the 15th and 16th of November 1940, the nazi press was exultant "Coventry is no more! The English now know how strong we are!"

500 planes dropped on this great city of central England, some 500 tons of explosive bombs and 30 tons of incendiary bombs. Of the 1,000 buildings in the centre of the city only 31 remained fit to live in. This merciless prelude began Hitler fascism's air war against open cities. The nazi jargon was enriched by a new word "Coventrien" which is synonymous with cancelling, or as Hitler screamed in his speeches "to rub out".

The swastika torn from the ATHENS Acropolis

When the nazi aggressors invaded Greece and entered Athens on April 22, 1941, the population carried themselves proudly in spite of the flood of tanks and planes. As soon as his position was secure, the enemy began to loot the country, especially for food.

400,000 persons died of famine in Greece. Children, youth, men and women dropped dread from starvation in the streets.

But from the first days of the occupation the Greek people began their resistance against the nazi occupation and Italian and Bulgarian fascists that the nazis had brought into the country.

On May 29, 1941, two young men, Manolis Glezos and Apostolis Santas, reaching the Acropolis through an underground tunnel, climbed the rock promontory under the nose of the nazi guards and tore down the Hitler swastika flag that was floating there, desecrating that historic site.

Athens was a powerful bastion of Greek resistance.

On March 22, 1943, the National Liberation Front, EAM, organised a great demonstration to prevent the Bulgarian fascists who already occupied eastern Macedonia, from accupying Salonika and the whole province. 300,000 unarmed persons massed in the centre of the city, protesting in front of the nazi "Kommandantur". Tanks were blocking the road, but people pressed forward, with the youth in front, until the tanks were encircled.

Two girls, in the excitement of the struggle, climbed on top of a tank. Taking off a shoe, one hit a nazi soldier in the face with it through the front port of the tank as he was shooting at the crowd. One minute later she fell riddled with bullets, while her companion was crushed by the tank.

But the people had prevented the Bulgarian fascists from taking over Macedonia.

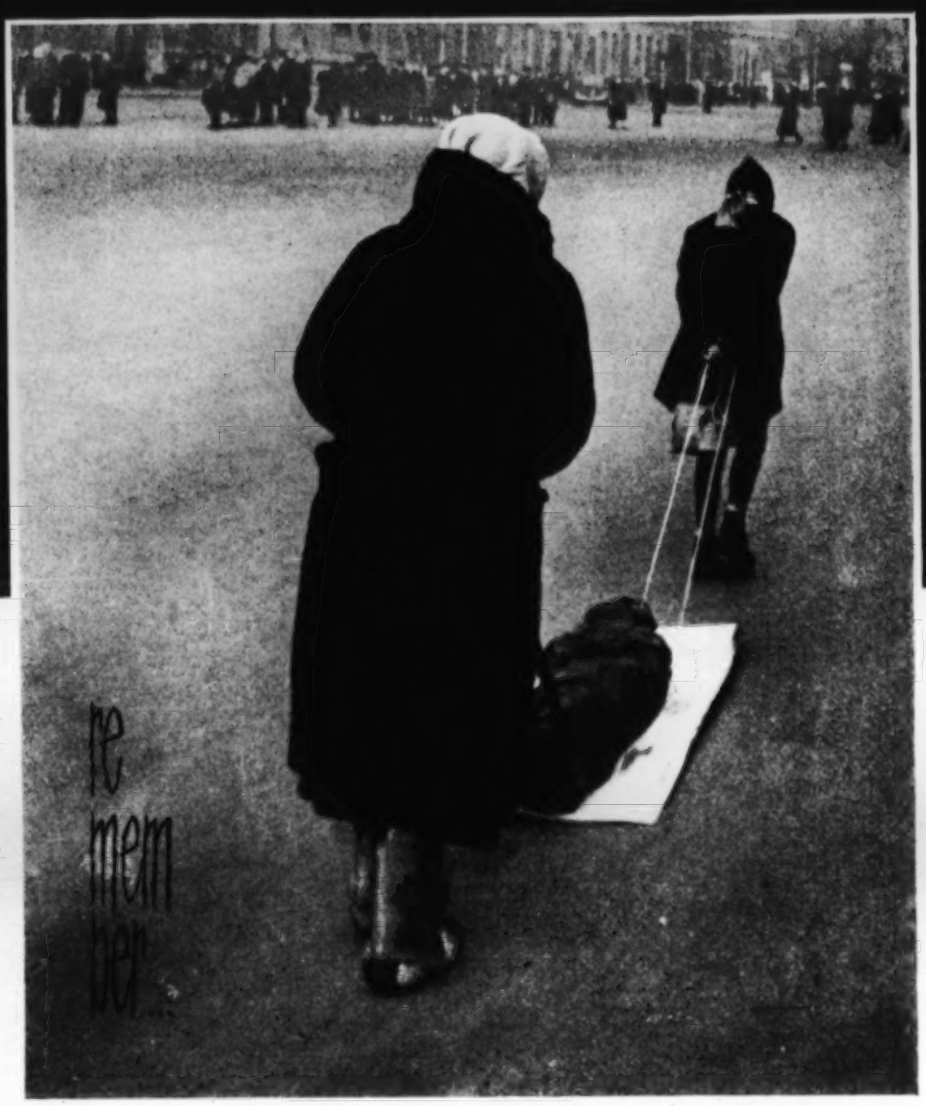
In the same way they prevented the mobilisation of men for the front and of women for forced labour in Germany.

In 1944 all Athens had become a battlefield ...

Taken from information received from the Pan Hellenic Women's Organisation

LENINGRAD

900 days under seige



1942 in Leningrad under siege. How the dead were taken to the cemetery.

Today, on Nevski Prospect, one of the main streets of Leningrad.

The nazi invader never succeeded in taking Leningrad, one of the greatest centres of political, economic and cultural life of the USSR, cradle of the Revolution. The resistance was possible because of the unbeatable heroism of the population.

For 900 days, two and a half million inhabitants, of which almost half a million were children, remained blockaded in the city. To the horror of the bombardments — over 260,000 bombs and heavy artillery shells were dropped — hunger was added.

The stocks of food in the blockaded city were quickly exhausted. It was only possible to bring in new supplies by air, but to reach the city Soviet planes had to literally fly through a wall of fire put up by the enemy. Rationing became harsher and harsher. On November 20, 1941, the daily bread ration, the only food, was cut to 250 grams for the workers and to 125 grams for employees and people looking after children. In addition, to assure even this meagre ration, bran, oil seed cake and digestible cellulose had to be mixed in the flour. The famine was terrible and children were the main victims.

The city was in complete darkness. Street cars did not function. Fuel was lacking and the thermometer dropped to 30 and 40° below zero. The houses were poorly protected from the cold, most of the windows having been shattered, water and sewers were frozen. *On January 1942 the death rate reached 4,000 a day.* To take the bodies of their loved ones to the cemetery, the survivors who were themselves in an extremely weakened state, used toboggans or children's sledges. Thus, *within the confines of Leningrad, 632,000 persons died of starvation, cold and disease.*

During the most difficult period of the seige *a 300 kilometre long road was opened over the ice of Lake Ladoga,* which is close to Leningrad. The city's inhabitants called it "the road of life". Over this road, in spite of uninterrupted bombings, heavily laden lorries carried food, arms, fuel and munitions in an endless convoy to Leningrad. On their return trip they took out women, children, old and sick people. *In spite of everything, Leningrad continued to live,* its factories, plants, research centres and schools kept on functioning.

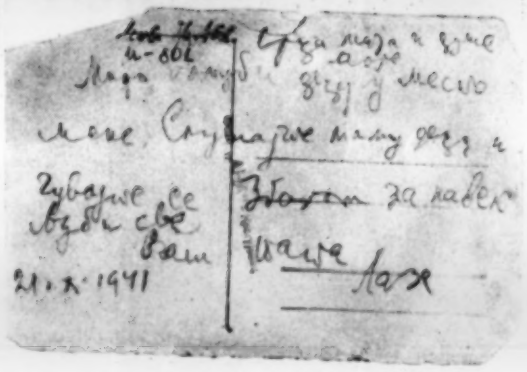
Women played a prominent role in defending and rebuilding this city. Everywhere they replaced their husbands and fathers. Women and girls made up 80% of the local air-raid defence units. In the terrible conditions of the blockade, 88,000 women became blood donors.

In January 1943, the Soviet Army broke the seige and on January 27, 1944, the Leningrad sky was lit up by multicoloured rockets, thundering salvoes announced victory and liberation.

Over 20 years have since gone by . . .

The city on the Neva has found once again all its charm and irresistible attraction. Once again an animated crowd fills Nevski Prospect. Tourists come from all corners of the world to admire its palaces and monuments, its museums and avenues, to enjoy the incomparable beauty of its white nights and the art of its celebrated ballet. But not everybody visits the Museum of Leningrad's history, where, under a glass jar, the little piece of bread which represented the daily ration of everyone at the time of the blockade is displayed. This piece of bread and the suffering of thousands and thousands of children, women and men cannot be forgotten. We cannot allow that the torment lived through in Leningrad, should be repeated in any place on our planet.

Material sent to us by the Soviet women's Committee



Kragujevac: a few of the 7,000 . . .

Farewell message dropped by one of the 7,000 during the death march.

A symbolic monument: the extended, but broken wings of their youth . . .

KRAGUJEVAC – martyred city

If, in October, you find yourself in Kragujevac, before one of the 33 tombs, you will have the impression that the black flags are blocking your sight. You will wish to join one of those black parades which is heading towards the Memorial Park where 7,000 persons were shot in one single day.

There could be many things said about the city on the shores of Lepenica, which in the beginning of the 11th century was a modest Turkish town. It was the first capital of Serbia. This is where the first socialist ideas of the Balkans were born. It is also here that the first courts, the first music schools and first school institutions were formed. But when you stop before the great marble monuments, one single thought is foremost in your mind: what happened on October 21, 1941?

The jack boots of the German fascist soldiers echoed through the town. The fronts of the cafes were covered with immense posters which stated: "For every German soldier killed, we shall shoot 100 inhabitants of Kragujevac". The first to be arrested were the communists.

When the workers of the first cannon foundry refused to manufacture for the Germans, the machines were immediately torn out and shipped off to various countries of Europe.

The decision of the people in the region to launch an insurrection was quickly arrived at. The Kragujevac detachment of Partisans was organised. Sabotage grew apace.

Reprisals were not long in coming. Gallows were set up in a silent street of Kragujevac.

During the morning of October 20, the city was blockaded. At the time it had 30,000 inhabitants. A German punitive column supported by auxiliaries, marched through the streets of the city, and spread out over schools, offices, houses and churches. All males from 15 to 60 were arrested. Long columns of men thus seized were headed towards Sumarice where the inhabitants of Kragujevac once went on excursions. The students of two colleges were driven from their classes. From the classroom to death. They left during the last lesson. They will never again need the school bags full of books. Mothers, wives and children accompanied this endless column to the park, just outside the town. Jammed into miserable shelters, 7,000 persons spent a frightful night there, waiting for death.

On October 21, at dawn, the bloody orgy began at Sumarice, in the quiet green clearings and dales. The men and children were divided into groups. Their hands were tied and they were mowed down with machine guns. The Yugoslav anthemn was sung by students, who held the hands of their professors, in the face of the soldiers pointing their guns at them.

Over 6,000 workers and men of various professions, including 2 college directors, 18 professors, 300 students and 2 school employees died in dignity. There were children of 8 to 12. The survivors had to bow to the orders of the nazis and return to work. But workers and students became less and less. Groups of workers, and entire classes of students headed for the mountains to join the partisans. In the city, more raids took place. The occupiers miscalculated, they had failed to implant fear and obedience in the heart of an indomitable country.

After three years of servitude and struggle, Kragujevac, the martyred city, the heroic city, was liberated on the day of the anniversary of the execution of its inhabitants, October 21, 1944. Then the death of the children of Kragujevac aroused the world. Today, the courage they displayed in the face of death is a call to struggle so that there may never again be violence, destroyed cities and humiliated peoples.

Above their tomb rises a symbolic monument: The extended but broken wings of their youth. An immense Memorial Park surrounds the monument. At the entrance of the park, a school and the Hall of Working Youth, at the centre, the museum where the most moving testimony of the drama are the school books with bullet holes in them and the blood-soaked shirts of the workers. In the park 33 tombs have been set up at the spot where they were shot. Around them an exuberant life has been resumed.

Sent to us by the Conference of Social Activities of Yugoslavian women

In WARSAW, they do not forget...

Warsaw! We live there as millions of other people live in other great cities. In the rush hours we take our places aboard the busses, at times of leisure we rush to the cafe to drink a quick cup of coffee, we hurry, afraid of being late. The city imposes its rhythm on us, decides the tempo of our lives, we are a minute particle of this huge palpitating being.

And yet, not so long ago, this city did not exist ...

Warsaw — the first city to feel the onslaught of the Second World War — had already in September 1939, 50,000 dead among its inhabitants and 12% of all its buildings destroyed. Perhaps, to increase its sufferings, the Hitler occupiers had spread the work of destruction in stages: in 1943 the wiping out of the ghetto, after its heroic uprising — in 1944 the death of the whole city which was rising against the occupiers. The final list of crimes brings the total of those killed to 800,000 and the destruction of the city to 85%. The day after liberation the people returned to the desolate place where their homes had once stood.

Did they return with the hope that they might find their home still standing? And possibly, without consciously expressing it, they may have felt they would find their loved onces there, perhaps still living. The walls of burned houses were soon covered with white inscriptions, printed in large letters by Soviet soldiers

"Min nyet" — no mines. Alongside little white cards appeared, pasted there by the old inhabitants of the houses, laconic notes, pathetic, announcing that somebody had returned, that he was waiting, living at such and such a place.

The war was raging, when on February 1, 1945, the Government decided that Warsaw would be rebuilt, that it would continue being the capital of Poland.

It would be impossible to try and explain the atmosphere after that. In spite of everything, there was a steel-like determination to implant life there once again. There was no doubt, only an unconscious, determined will not to give in to the enemy's decision to wipe the city of Warsaw off the map of the world. At the same time there grew an understanding of the enormous labour this meant, and also what this would mean to the whole nation. There was the period when everything was just beginning: here was the first bridge, for the first time water began to flow from the taps, here were the first kitchens for distributing warm meals, the first street car, loudly acclaimed by the crowds. Until it gradually became more and more difficult to note the successes, they multiplied, they followed one another, transforming the picture of the city and the life of its inhabitants.

Today, when 20 years separate us from those days, Warsaw is adding up the result of its work. We could point out that instead of 100,000 inhabitants on the day of liberation, Warsaw now has 1,300,000 that 70% of the population of the capital lives in houses built after the war.

But the fact that we live a normal life in a normal city does not mean that we have forgotten. We remember very well — and not only on anniversaries — that here, on the sidewalks of this city, the blood of our dear ones flowed, under the bullets of the fascist murderers. We know, we have learned it through our own suffering, how little time is needed to destroy a house and how much effort is needed to build a new one. We know full well how little time it takes to kill a man and what are the unlimited sufferings of those who survive.

From the Polish Women's Committee

Two visions of hell

The end of the war was nearing and the issue — the defeat of Russia — was without doubt. Was the war to spare the country from which it had been launched?
Dresden and Hiroshima are there to show that it was not to be, to warn that whoever launches a war exposes his own country to war. And in Dresden and Hiroshima the expiation was terrible.

DRESDEN

On coming to the Great Garden I found, instead of the hoped-for shelter, a veritable hell. Trees were burning, the lawns were flaming, they produced a terrible mosaic effect with dark smoking patches here and there. But these dark patches were human beings, dead or rolling in agony. Thousands, trying to escape, fell, rose to try a few more steps, then collapsed not to move again. A stranger asked me in panic what had happened to his wife. I shrugged and he left me as though he had understood — although he was evidently out of his mind — that I was as powerless as he.

One vision remains forever etched in my memory. Bodies of men, women and especially children, hanging in unimaginable positions from the branches of trees, arms, legs and other pieces of bodies hanging from leafless trees like nightmarish fruit. While I was trying to escape I saw a woman, holding a child in each hand, run by. A second later a burning tree trunk fell on her. The two children continued running while the two halves of the mother's body seemed to move independetly on both sides of the tree.

My hair, brows and clothing scorched, I finally succeeded in getting out of that hell and sought refuge with friends at Strehlen ...

GRETA PALUCCA, dancer

and HIROSHIMA

Ah, that moment! I had the impression that I was hit in the back with a huge hammer and that I was thrown into boiling oil. I lost consciousness, and when I came to all about me was hidden in a thick black smoke, stifling; everything was unreal and seemed to be quite senseless. My chest ached and I could barely breathe. I thought: "This is the end". I was laying face down and crying endlessly for help.

I cried: "Mommy, daddy!" but neither my mother or father answered me.

Then I got the idea that I was going to die. But suddenly I saw the smiling face of my little sister, now dead. I made an effort. In a darkness such as must exist at the bottom of hell, I heard the voices of other students calling for their mothers; they seemed to be trying to get away from this horrible place, and instinctively I followed them. Around about the Tsurumi bridge my foot got tangled into a red hot wire. I don't know how I was able to untangle myself; everything was taking place very fast, as though in a dream, and I crossed the bridge right to the other side. Then I realised that everything about me was enveloped in thick white smoke. At the moment the bomb dropped, I was at Tanakcho, some 600 metres from the explosion, right near the Tsumuri bridge. I had the impression that the wind was carrying me to the north and that everything had changed.

At that place, near a great covered cistern, I saw a crying woman holding a baby above her head, whose body was as red as fire. Another mother was crying and wailing, trying to feed her baby at her burned breast.

In the cistern there were students and school children with only their heads and their clasped hands, as though in prayer, showing above the water. Everyone going by was hurt, no one stopped to help. From afar one could mistake the silhouettes with heads covered with white dust for human beings, but seen at close quarters ...

All of a sudden I thought in fear: "It is not possible, am I ..." I looked at my hands and saw that they were covered with blood and that something like shreds was hanging from my arms, the

flesh of which was striped with white, black and red. Frightened, I sought my handerkerchief in the pocket of my trousers, but their was neither handkerchief nor pocket, only the shreds of burned trousers. Suddenly I felt that my face was swelling but I could do nothing and my friends and I decided to take the long road to the suburbs where we lived. We went through streets lined with burning houses and my back was terribly hot.

We heard desperate cries coming from the burning ruins, then the voices were lost in the embers.

My body is still covered with scars. When I touch these blackish and red marks on my head, my face, arms and legs, chest, and when I look in the mirror thinking that I will never again see my face of other days, that my whole life long I will be condemned to living like this, I become prey to an endless sadness, having lost all hope for the future. Never, please never, should it be permitted that human lives should once again be so destroyed.

ATSUKO TSUJODKA,
Young girl student

The inhabitants of Hiroshima and Nagasaki lived it . . .

. . . The monument to the victims of the atom bombing is a call to vigilance not only for the inhabitants of Hiroshima but for men and women of all countries.

THE FATE OF A MAN

(Continued from page 13)

how I carried him in. My friend and his wife were both at home. I came in and winked at them with both eyes, and bold and cheerful I says: 'Well, I've found my little Vanya at last. Here we are, good people.' They hadn't got any children themselves and they both wanted a kid, so they guessed what was up straightaway and started bustling around. And I just couldn't get away from my son. But somehow I managed to persuade him. I washed his hands with soap, sat him down at the table. My friend's wife ladled him out a plate of soup, and when she saw how he gulped it down, she just burst into tears. She stood at the stove, crying into her apron. And my Vanya, he saw she was crying, and he ran up to her, tugged at her skirt and said: 'Why are you crying, Auntie? Daddy found me near the café. Everybody ought to be happy, and you are crying.' But she only cried all the harder, made herself all wet, she did!

"After dinner I took him to the barber's and had his hair cut, and at home I gave him a bath myself in a tub and wrapped him up in a clean sheet. He put his arms round me and went to sleep in my arms. I laid him gently in bed, drove off to the elevator, unloaded the grain, took the lorry back to the park and ran off to the shops. I bought him a pair of serge trousers, a little shirt, a pair of sandals and a straw cap. Of course, it all turned out to be the wrong size and no good for quality. My friend's wife even gave me a ticking-off over the trousers. 'Are you crazy,' she says, 'dressing a boy in serge trousers in heat like this!' And the next minute she had the sewing machine on the table and was rummaging in the chest, and in an hour she had a pair of cotton trousers and a little white shirt ready for my Vanya. I took him to bed with me and for the first time for many a night fell asleep peacefully. I woke up about four times in the night though. And there he was, nestling in the crook of my arm, like a sparrow under the eaves, breathing away softly, and I can't find words to tell you how much joy I felt. I'd try not to move so as not to disturb him, but it was no good. I'd get up very quiet, light a match and just stand there, admiring him.

"Just before daybreak I woke up and I couldn't make out why it seemed so stuffy. And it was my little son, he'd climbed out of his sheet and was lying right across my chest, with his little foot on my throat. He's a rare young fidget to sleep with, he is, but I've got used to him, I miss him when he's not there. At night, you can look at him while he's sleeping, or you can smell his curls, and the pain eases off your heart and it feels softer. You see, my heart had got like a lump of stone with grief ...

"At first he used to ride with me while I drove the lorry, then I realised that that wouldn't do. What do I need when I'm on my own? A hunk of bread and an onion with a pinch of salt will last a soldier the whole day. But with him it's different. Now you've got to get him some milk, now you've got to boil an egg for him, and he can't get along without something hot. But I had my work to do. So I plucked up my courage and left him in the care of my friend's wife. Well, he just cried all day, and in the evening ran away to the elevator to meet me. Waited there till late at night.

"I had a hard time with him at first. After one very tiring day we went to bed when it was still light. He used to be always chirruping like a sparrow, but this time he was very quiet. 'What are you thinking about, son?' I asked. He just looks up at the ceiling and asks me: 'What did you do with your leather coat, Daddy?' And I'd never had a leather coat in my life! I had to get round it somehow. 'Left it in Voronezh,' I told him. 'And why were you so long looking for me?' So I said: 'I looked for you, sonny, in Germany, in Poland, and all over Byelorussia. and you turned up in Uryupinsk.' 'Is Uryupinsk nearer than Germany? Is it far from our house to Poland? And so we went on talking till we dropped off to sleep.

"But do you think there wasn't a reason for his asking about that leather coat, mate? No, there was a reason behind it all right. It meant at some time or other his real father had worn a coat like that, and he had just remembered it. A kid's memory is like summer lightning, you know; it flashes and lights things up for a bit, then dies away. And that was how his memory worked, like the flashes of summer lightning.

"Mebbe we'd have gone on living another year in Uryupinsk together, but in November I had an accident. I was driving along a muddy road through a village and I went into a skid, and there happened to be a cow in the way and I knocked it over. Well, you know how it is, the women raised a hullabaloo, folk came crowding round, and soon there was a traffic inspector on the spot. I asked him to go easy, but he took my licence away. The cow got up, stuck its tail in the air and went galloping away down the street, but I lost my licence. I went through the winter as a joiner, and then got in touch with an old army friend — he works as a driver in our district — and he invited me to go and stay with him. You can do joinery work for a year, he says, then you can get a new licence in our region. So now my son and I, we're on the march to Kashary.

"But even if I hadn't had that accident with the cow, you know, I'd have left Uryupinsk just the same. My grief won't let me stay in one place for long. Now, when my Vanya gets older and he's got to be sent to school, then, mebbe, I'll knuckle under and settle down. But for the time being we're tramping the Russian land together."

"Does he get tired?" I asked.

"Well, he doesn't walk much on his own feet, most of the time he rides on me. I hoist him on to my shoulder and carry him, and if he wants to stretch his legs, he jumps down and runs about at the side of the road, prancing around like a little goat. All that wouldn't matter, mate, we'd get along all right, the only thing is my heart's got a knock in it somewhere, ought to have a piston changed. Some times it gives me such a stab I don't know what I'm doing. I'm afraid one day I may die in my sleep and frighten my little son. And then there's another trouble. Nearly every night I see in my dreams the dear ones I've lost. And mostly it's as if I was behind barbed wire and they were on the other side, at liberty. I talk about everything to Irina and the children, but as soon as I try to pull the barbed wire apart, they go away, seem to melt before my eyes. And there's another funny thing about it. In the daytime I always keep a firm grip on myself, you'll never get a sob or a sign out of me, but sometimes I wake up at night and my pillow's wet with tears ..."

From the river came the sound of my friend's voice and the splash of oars in the water.

This stranger, who now seemed a close friend of mine, held out his big hand, firm as a block of wood:

"Good-bye mate, good luck to you!"

"Good luck and a good journey to Kashary!"

"Thank you kindly. Heh, sonny, let's go to the boat."

The boy ran to his father's side, took hold of the corner of his quilted jacket and started off with tiny steps beside his striding father.

Two orphans, two grains of sand swept into strange parts by the tremendous hurricane of war ... What did the future hold for them? I wanted to believe that this Russian, this man of unbreakable will, would stick it out, and that the boy would grow at his father's side into a man who could endure anything, overcome any obstacle if his country called upon him to do so.

I felt sad as I watched them go. Perhaps everything would have been all right at our parting but for Vanya. After he had gone a few paces, he twisted round on his stumpy legs and waved to me with his little rosy hand. And suddenly a soft but taloned paw seem to grip my heart, and I turned hastily away. No, not only in their sleep do they weep, these elderly men whose hair grew grey in the years of war. They weep, too, in their waking hours. The main thing is to be able to turn away in time. The really important thing is not to wound a child's heart, not to let him see that dry, burning tear on the cheek of a man.

Vietnam

An open wound

In the name of the millions of women of the world organisation of which I have the honour to be President, the Women's International Democratic Federation, I wish to express the profound indignation we all feel at the aggressive acts committed by the Government of the United States of America against the Democratic Republic of Vietnam.

The bombings of South and North Vietnam are a flagrant violation of the 1954 Geneva Agreements;

the use of napalm and gas are evidence of barbaric savagery;

and the expressed desire of the American Government to continue with the escalation of the war endangers world peace.

In solidarity with the women of all Vietnam and all the Vietnamese people, revolted by the refined cruelties of which they are victims, anguished by the threat of war which hangs over humanity, the women of the whole world unite with all peace forces to demand:

an immediate end to bombings and all acts of aggression by the United States of America against the Democratic Republic of Vietnam; and, as part of the application of the Geneva Agreements, the withdrawal of American troops from South Vietnam; an end to American intervention in the internal affairs of Vietnam and respect for its independence.

E. Cotton

WIDF President.

How many children will not survive this "humanitarian" gas

Madeleine Riffaud, French journalist, lived for two months in the jungle of South Vietnam with the patriots of the National Liberation Front. We publish here excerpts of a reportage she wrote on her return to France.

In South Vietnam the Americans have used gas against the population of liberated villages. After having reluctantly admitted this new crime, the State Department rushed into embarrassed declarations trying to reassure world public opinion, pretending that this gas is only a tear gas, causing at worst some vomitting and only blinding its victims "temporarily". This new form of chemical warfare, it is said, is used for "humanitarian" reasons, so as to "neutralise the Viet-Cong mingling with the population", the American specialists say! There were very insistant on the fact that this gas is not fatal ...

Let us state right off that chemical warfare, since the Korean war, has been experimented with many times by the United States. In South Vietnam itself, for years the American air force has been trying to starve the liberated regions by spreading toxic powders from the air, which burn the vegetation, flowers and the children. Protests arose throughout the world, even in the United States itself, against this first phase of chemical warfare. In Vietnam itself the victims, such as at Bentre in December 1963, conducted powerful political struggles (most often successful) against the American officers and those of the mercenary army, who quite often were confronted with thousands of persons, without weapons, carrying their wounded. And quite often the soldiers of the mercenary army themselves made common cause with the people, protesting against chemical warfare. So much so that all that has resulted to now (we have seen that with our own eyes some weeks ago) has been an increase in the determination of the South Vietnamese people to fight until the last American has left their country.

The "Anti-Vietnamese Rat" gas, to use the ruthless expression of an American "technician" is in fact a gas that does what? It is a toxic gas designed to deprive whoever breathes it in, of his reason and sight. "Not deadly"? If experimented with in a peaceful country, perhaps, but used against families that seek refuge in underground shelters, shelters where there is already a lack of air, it is another question. Supposedly paralysing "momentarily" those affected, it nevertheless delivers them to death, defenceless, permitting their capture and turning them over to the torturers. Under war conditions we should not play with words: those gasses are naturally deadly.

Toxic by the admission of the very people who have developed it, it is an open violation of the most elementary international conventions. And please tell me how the American aviators and their masters can pretend that their gas only affects patriots and adults in a village where they use it? Even if you argue that this gas can only half kill, blind "for some time" the adults, what happens to the children, even babies who cannot be protected from breathing in these poisons?

I saw children whose faces and tiny bodies were mutilated for life by burns from napalm and toxic chemicals. And how many did not survive! How can these crimes against all humanity be wiped off the pages of history?

(Continued on page 31)

Near the Da-Nang U.S. Base in South Vietnam – an attack against the patriotic forces with flame-throwers.

From an article by British Journalist

Anthony Carthew, correspondent of the British newspaper "The Sun" in which he described the horror of the war conducted by the Americans against the population of South Vietnam.

SAIGON: Wednesday – There are today about 200,000 South Vietnamese refugees from the hills and the jungle packed into the coastal cities ... There is no doubt that many of them are fleeing from American bombing raids. Their number has grown alarmingly since US Canberra jets began to bomb the mountain regions.

The hospitals all along the coast are full of civilians wounded in the bombardments. In the Da-Nang hospital, for example, the wounded are packed two and sometimes three per bed, and it is not a question of European style hospital beds, but of cots, that we at home would possibly use for children.

What are the weapons that have caused most of the wounds? Napalm, white phosphorus and 'lazy dog' missiles. I was a witness to the use of napalm here. I was in a helicopter hovering over a battlefield and I saw the terrible ravages of fire. It burns even the rice in the flooded rice paddies. I also saw a victim of napalm. Once only. I haven't a weak nervous system but I am doubtful whether I can look on such a thing again. This man had been sprayed with napalm. From his head to his feet the skin was peeling off his body. Nevertheless he was still alive. And that is perhaps what is most horrbile about white phosphorus: although the body is transformed into a torch, the victim continues to live.

The 'lazy dog' missile – God knows what military mind dreamed up this horrible name – has been used here for some weeks now. The Americans now admit it officially. It's a large container which explodes about 30 feet above ground and scatters some 10,000 pieces of steel that whistle through the air. Each one of these pieces is shaped to make them spin at a great speed. This weapon can kill over an area of 700 square metres, and is still 'useful' over a wider area. In the coastal town hospitals one finds many victims of the 'lazy dog'.

Thus, coming from all directions the refugees are leaving the jungle at a rate of over a thousand a day.

Primitive camps have been built and coastal areas have been bulldozed flat so as to allow supplies from the sea to come in. But for me this changes nothing in the stupidity of a policy which is inexcusable not only for humanitarian reasons but also for military reasons.

It seems that the Americans have now begun a scorched earth policy in the mountain regions of South Vietnam. Unable to defeat the Viet Cong in battle on land, they are now trying to annihilate it with fire.

And it is said that the Strategic Air Command plans to send over bombers which, by using missiles controlled by radar, would carry out attacks 24 hours a day, which could not be affected by weather conditions.

This horrible massacre kills a few partisans, but is this a means of bringing peace and security to South Vietnam?

Or is it simply an opportunity to put into action the most recent scientific methods to create in a short period of a few weeks a burned-out desert, a land without inhabitants?

Disregarding peoples hopes

"It is inadmissable and shameful for humanity that millions of men, women and children are still suffering under colonial enslavement, that many countries of Africa, Latin America and Asia are still economically dependent on imperialist states, that there are still fascist dictatorships 18 years after the defeat of Hitler. All peoples should be able to live freely and independently, choose their own way of living and their own social system.

We support the women and peoples who struggle against all kinds of imperialist oppression and all forms of colonialism and the remnants of feudalism, for their liberty and national independence.

We support the women who struggle and suffer under the hard conditions of fascism. And we struggle so that there will no longer be one single woman left in prison for having defended her children, freedom and peace."

(Appeal of the World Congress of Women – Moscow 1963)

With the end of the Second World War a great surge of hope for freedom, national independence, peace and for a better life arose throughout the world.

Great international democratic organisations uniting different strata of the population were born.

The United Nations Organisation was founded, whose Charter defined the equal rights of peoples and their right to self-determination. In 1948 the Universal Declaration of Human Rights was proclaimed. The adoption of these documents marked an immense advance for humanity.

And yet, this hope and progress is not enjoyed by all peoples.

In Spain, where one could have thought that the defeat of Hitler fascism would lead to the inevitable and rapid fall of the Franco regime, things unhappily did not work out that way. In Portugal and in other countries, democrats continue to be imprisoned, tortured and shot.

The great surge of national liberation of the colonial and dependent peoples has always come up against the violent and cruel spirit of domination by colonialism, which is gradually giving way before the unbelievably sacrificing struggles of the peoples of Asia and Africa, particularly in Korea, Vietnam, Algeria, Congo ...

Racism which claimed so many victims under the Hitler regime, has not been beaten either. In South Africa, in the USA, Negro citizens have to launch enormous struggles against the racist, ultra-reactionary forces to obtain their rights.

Almost the day after the victory of the anti-fascist coalition a so-called "cold war" period set in with the purpose of beating back the great world wide hope for universal peace based on respect for international law.

Korea, Suez, Cuba ... names that recall crucial periods when the world was on the brink of war.

20 years have already gone by since the end of hostilities and a peace treaty with Germany has still not been signed.

The arms race continues, a race for atomic arms which entails so many risks for humanity.

But the hope, the desire for peace, national independence, liberty and a better life are stronger and will win out. We greet and support with all our strength this great hope, this will concretised by struggle, already victorious in many parts of the world, of the peaceful and democratic forces.

In this year of 1965, let us contribute to new victories so that fascism and war can be forever crushed.

Korea 1950 . . .

South Africa: the face of apartheid.

To save your child

Mother
Your sobs are not enough
To save your child
One does not disarm death
with tears

What the Spanish poet, Juan Rajano, told women in this verse of a poem he dedicated to the World Congress of Mothers was fully understood by them. Educated in the anti-fascist struggle, the message it contained was already clear to them in 1945. Rising against the forces which are ready to hold so cheaply the lives women give birth to, they continue to give all the strength of their mother love to the awakening of universal conscience in the face of the threat of the horrible cataclysm of a third world war, a thermonuclear war. They have demonstrated their revolt at the massacres of the children of their sisters fighting for the liberation of their peoples ...

Following the war, a responsibility:
TO ASSURE PEACE

From the very beginning women understood the necessity to shoulder their share of this responsibility. They stated so at the constituent Congress of the new women's international organisation which sprang up immediately at the end of the war against fascism: the Women's International Democratic Federation. In the program of activity they adopted, they indissolubly linked the questions of women's equality and the happiness of children to that of safeguarding peace in the world.

"... We take the solemn oath to struggle without rest to assure to the world a lasting peace which is the only guarantee for the happiness of our homes and the flowering of our children..."

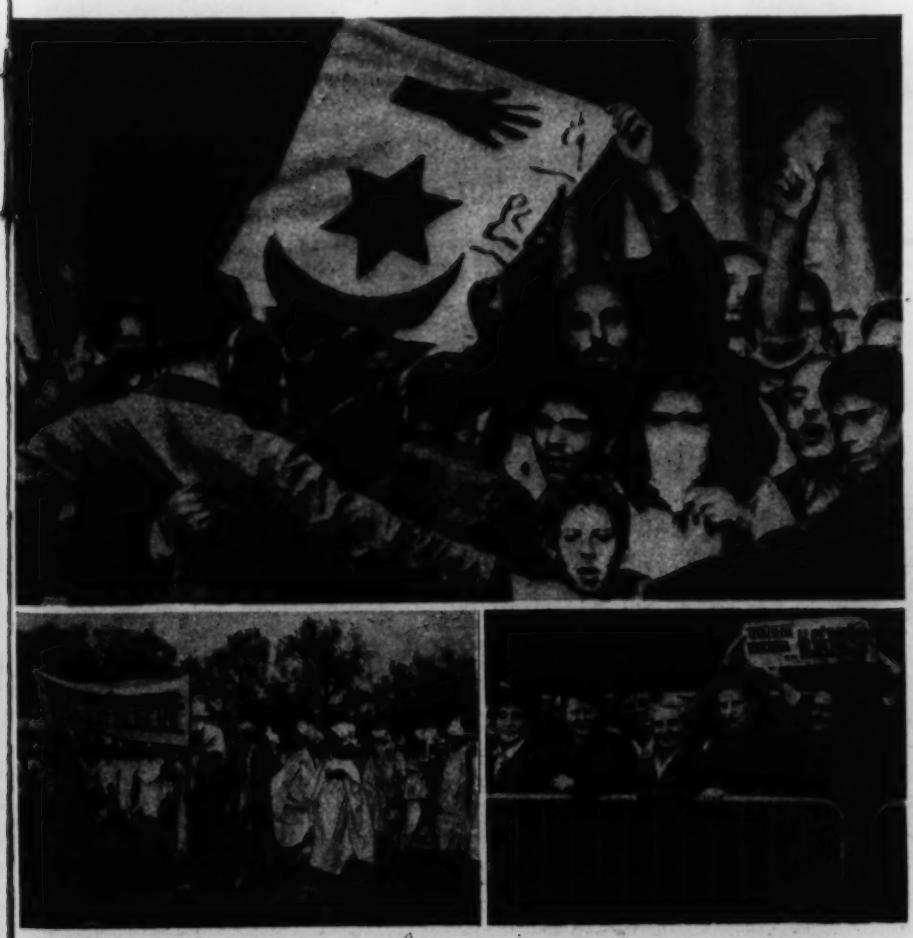
(Oath of the Paris Congress, 1945)

For 20 years the WIDF did not cease appealing to women's sense of responsibility "towards their children, their people, to humanity ..." Not a single international meeting has been organised by it where this burning question was not dealt with, nearly always becoming the main subject of discussion by the participants.

"Children need peace as flowers need light"

Mme. Eugenie Cotton at the International Conference in Defence of Children, convened by the WIDF in 1952.

Their heroic battle for liberty, the basis of a true peace ...



In VIETNAM, KOREA, ALGERIA, (Photo alongside) SUEZ and CUBA. And in other countries where they are contributing in their millions to prevent the aggressor that comes to their country, from killing their children, sowing destruction and ruin, and trying to hang on by violence. They face torture in prisons, often making the supreme sacrifice to assure their people independence, the basis for future well-being and true peace. They also defend the right of their peoples to self-determination, set down immediately after the war in the Charter of the United Nations, every violation of which imperils peace.

... surrounded by the living solidarity of their sisters

That their sisters of other countries have understood has been shown by the solidarity they have given them during these 20 years.

- **FROM 1950 TO 1953 when the cease-fire came into effect, the women of the most varied countries demonstrated against the sending of troops to KOREA, or for their return. In 1951 the WIDF sent an international women's commission to enquire into the atrocities committed by the aggressor, the report of which aroused great emotion throughout the world.**
- **FROM 1946 TO 1954 when the Geneva Conference on Indochina took place, innumerable instances of solidarity reached the VIETNAMESE women. From France 400 women's delegations went to Geneva to demand peace.**
- **In 1956 at the time of the French Anglo-Israel aggression in Suez, hundreds of messages reached the Egyptian women. At the beginning of 1957 the WIDF sent a delegation of friendship and solidarity.**
- **FROM 1954 TO 1962 when the Evian Agreements were signed which opened the way for the independence of their country, the ALGERIAN women received innumerable tokens of material and moral solidarity from their sisters of all continents. A WIDF delegation greeted them warmly on their independence day. The solidarity born during the struggle has continued to manifest itself.**
- **All attempts against the sovereignty of CUBA, particularly during the Caribbean crises in 1962, when world peace was seriously threatened, aroused among the women of the whole world a powerful wave of solidarity in which the WIDF took part.**

Atomic weapons: An unprecedented threat against the life women bring forth

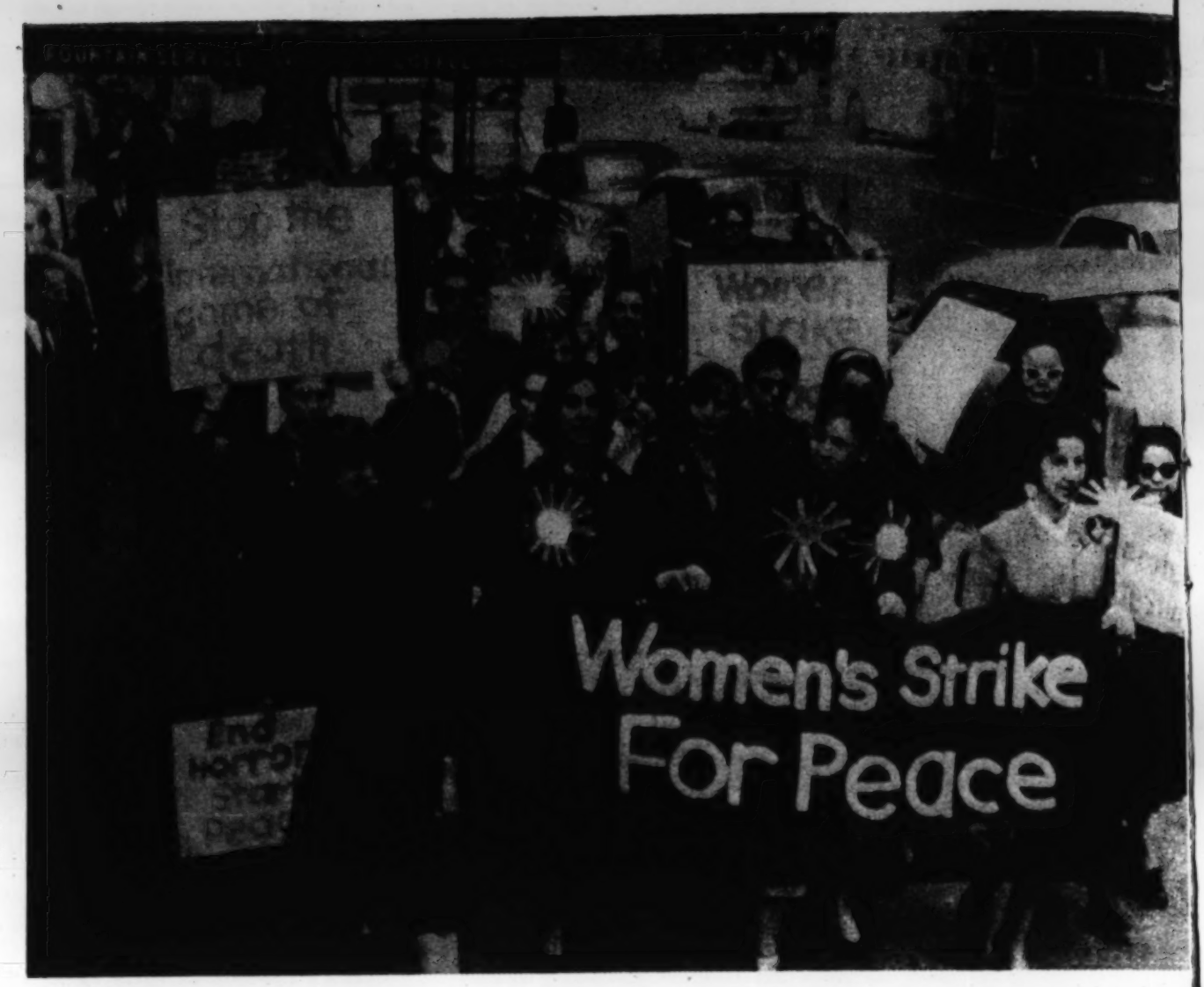
From as early as 1946, the WIDF called on the U.N. asking for the banning of atomic weapons and the utilisation of atomic energy for the welfare of humanity. In various countries of the world millions of signatures were collected.

Women understood that they had to unite with other peace forces so in 1949, the WIDF, together with the Intellectuals For Peace Movement, became the initiators of the World Peace Council.

In 1950 women collected 250 million signatures on the Stockholm Appeal for the banning of atomic weapons.

But the manufacture of atomic and then thermonuclear weapons continued. Stockpiles grew. The U.S.A. tested these weapons in international waters, killing a Japanese fisherman.

"We fear eating and drinking... Our babies are deformed... We appeal to all reasonable men and women to demand a ban on the manufacture, testing and use of such monstrous weapons as the hydrogen bomb." This heartrending appeal of Japanese women was, thanks to the support of the WIDF, broadcast throughout the world in millions of copies.



1955: The great display of mother love: The World Congress of Mothers

to defend their children against war.

"Together we will act to defend life against death, friendship against hatred, peace against war, as nothing can stop us in our struggle for the happiness and future of our children" (Convocation of the Congress).

The Congress brought together 1,060 participants from 66 countries and received the support of scientists, poets and personalities from public life. It received thousands of messages of greeting.

1963: "Woman is the mother of all children in the world"

... We cannot accept, that in this century of scientific and social progress in which we live, millions of children should be joyless, starving, illiterate, exploited, disinherited and fated to premature death. We cannot accept that animosity and hatred between races and peoples should be propagated, that the forces of reaction and war should poison and corrupt the soul of youth ...

"Immense resources are lost in the production of means of destruction and extermination. "Conscions of our responsibilities for the future of our children and the destiny of the world, we are firmly resolved to make our contribution to the struggle to ward off the threat of war an ever more important one. We wish to contribute to the building of a durable peace. We do not want war and we are convinced that conflicts between States can be solved though peaceful negotiations.

"We wish to work to establish peaceful coexistence between States with different social systems on the basis of mutual respect, of national integrity and soveignty, of non-aggression, non-intervention, equality and mutual advantage, to obtain general disarmament, complete and rigorously controlled, in the first place thermonuclear disarmament ..."

(World Congress of Women, Moscow, June 1963, with the participation of delegates from 113 countries).

On July 25, 1963, they felt a great satisfaction at the signing of the Moscow Treaty on the partial banning of nuclear tests, signed by over 100 countries.

"It is for women and mothers of all continents a great satisfaction to have seen their hope become a reality. It is for all of them a great encouragement to continue actively with the struggle to achieve, within the shortest possible time, total and controlled disarmament."

Mme. COTTON, WIDF President.

Tirelessly, the women explain the danger of nuclear arms, take part in mass actions against military pacts, the rearming of the revanchists in Germany, against the installation of military bases, for the settlement of differences between States through peaceful means, for the education of their children in a spirit of understanding and friendship between peoples, for disarmament, reinforcing their friendship and solidarity.

These International activities took place with the participation of the WIDF:

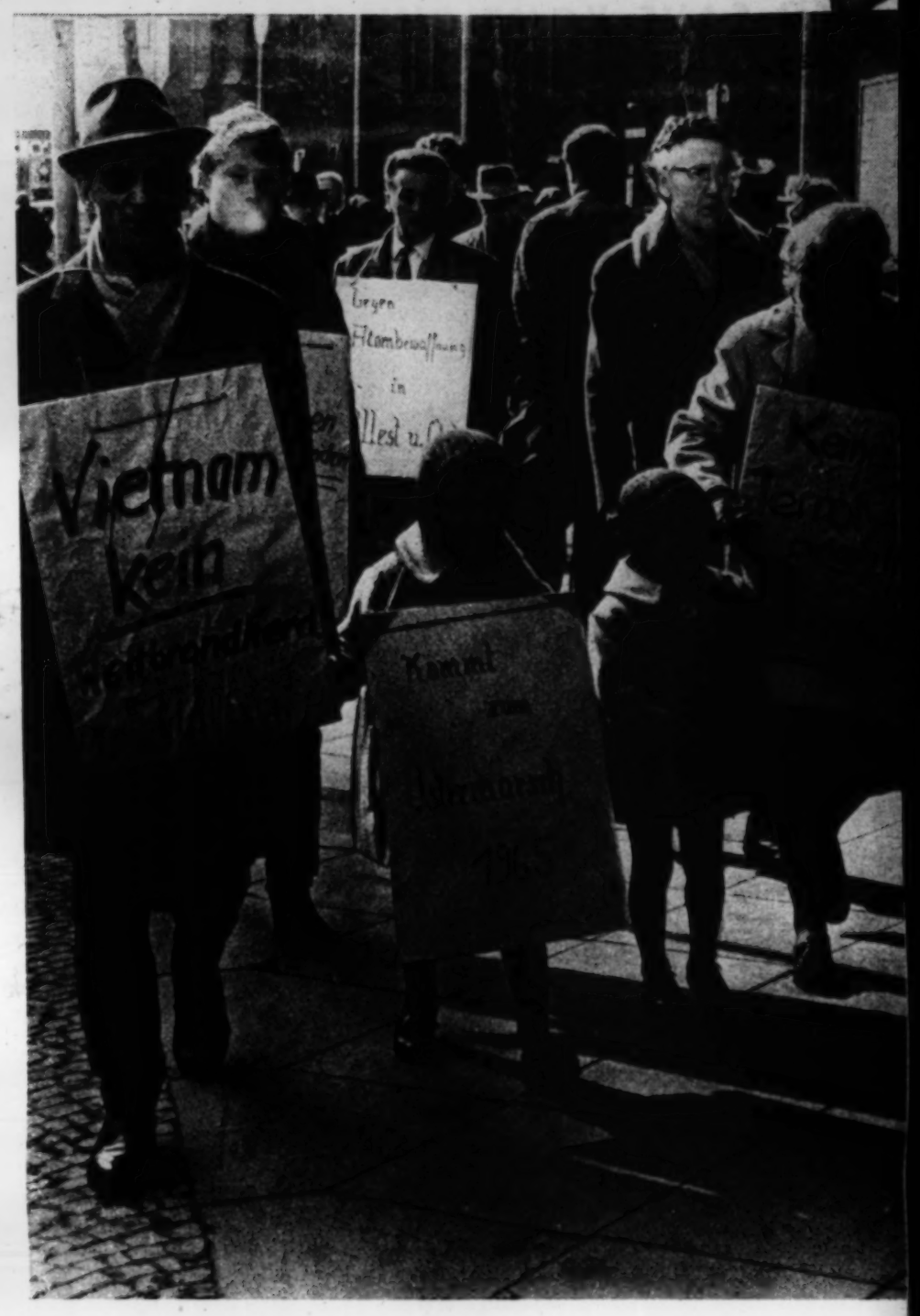
- **JUNE 1958, VIENNA – Conference in Defence of Life** (as part of the 4th WIDF Congress)
- **JULY 1959 IN BRUNATE – Meeting on the Responsibility of Women in the atomic era**
- **DECEMBER 1959, KUNGÄLV – International Gathering of Women for Disarmament**
- **OCTOBER 1960, SALZBURG – 2nd Meeting of European Women on the Responsibility of Women in the Atomic Era**
- **MARCH 1962, VIENNA – World Gathering of Women for Disarmament** followed by a delegation to the 18 nation Disarmament Conference in Geneva
- **NOVEMBER 1962, BRUSSELS – World Forum of Women on the Education of Children and Youth in a spirit of friendship and understanding between peoples.**

But serious dangers continue

Today victories have been won in the giant struggle begun for life, against death. The ideas of disarmament and peace have made indisputable progress. If women measure the road travelled since the end of the 2nd World War, they can be proud of the obstacles they have helped to erect in front of the belligerent forces, who would like to launch a world wide thermo-nuclear conflict, coining money from the lives of millions of children, of future generations. If peace is today on the agenda, it is largely thanks to them.

But the dissemination of nuclear arms is a fact. Disarmament negotiations are dragging. War rages in Vietnam where the American armed forces are killing children and are pushing a dangerous policy of "escalation" full of peril for world peace. There have been interventions in the Congo and Dominican Republic. Cuba is still threatened. A number of countries are competing to supply nuclear arms to the revanchists of Federal Germany.

AGAINST NUCLEAR TESTS, from Australia, Japan, Tahiti, New Zealand, Chile, Indonesia, even from France, where the women are rising against the national striking force and calling on their Government to sign the Moscow Treaty, they are protesting against the planned French tests in the Pacific. During peace marches in their country Australian women don their "Peace Aprons" on which are written slogans against the tests, against the arms race...



FOR NEGOTIATIONS IN VIETNAM ON THE BASIS OF THE RIGHTS OF PEOPLE, innumerable demonstrations, meetings, delegations and lobbies to the Government of the United States. On March 20, American women, at the call of their Peace movement WSP, once again carried out a day of action. Multiple signs of material and moral solidarity with the women of South and North Vietnam are in evidence. At the call of the WIDF, a Women's International Committee with the women of South Vietnam, was organised at the end of 1964.

Against bases on foreign soil, against the stationing of atomic submarines, women are demonstrating in many countries. Thus in Japan...

TO SAVE YOUR CHILD

The WIDF gives its active support to all actions for Peace, particularly the great WORLD CONGRESS FOR PEACE which will meet in July in Helsinki. In many countries women are already actively engaged in preparations for this great demonstration that will help to impose a recognition of the right of people to life and a true peace, finally 20 years after the victory over fascism.

Peace, friendship and solidarity, are the aims set out for the youth and students at their coming world festival, where 25,000 of them will come together in free Algeria. This initiative, which does much to educate youth in a spirit of peace and friendship among peoples, receives the full support of women because it coincides with their own aims.

WHAT THEY EXPECT FROM PEACE AND DISARMAMENT. Some examples: "Schools, stadiums, swimming pools, hospitals, the wiping out of hunger in the world" say the women of the world. "Low price housing", say those of Mexico. "Cheap food and plenty in a world of peace." say the women of India, who also desire "education, teaching, love of peace, friendship, respect and dignity and equality of peoples." "The rebirth of Austria," say the women of this country, who this year are trying to gain a better unterstanding of the generation born at the end of the war. "A corresponding increase of budgets for education and health", say those of Argentina. "A bright future where all children will fully enjoy the fruits of civilisation," say those of Rumania, while the British women propose a program calling for a 16% reduction in armaments to overcome ignorance, disease and hunger in the world. The drawing alongside, which illustrated the card of the Democratic Union of German Women for March 8, 1965, shows what they expect from peace.

UNION, FRIENDSHIP, COOPERATION

Their friendship is becoming stronger. Their meetings are multiplying. Vast international meetings — real demonstrations of friendship — exchanges of delegations, meetings on frontiers, women take advantage of all occasions to strengthen their cooperation in defense of peace.

International Women's Day on March 8 is a special opportunity for them to express their love of peace and their international solidarity. This year, during International Cooperation Year, initiatives are increasing: British women in both Germanies, in Mexico an exhibition of paintings and etchings on "Friendship and solidarity with women of the whole world", meetings on frontiers by Austrian women with their sisters of neighbouring countries. Patrice Lumumba's widow in the GDR for March 8, common action by American and French women for Peace in Vietnam. The words "Peace" and "Solidarity" abound in the numerous messages which reached the WIDF on March 8 from the most varied countries; from South Africa and Vietnam, the United States and Guinea, USSR and Algeria, Angola and Pakistan, Finland and Mongolia . . .

(Our photo) Planting roses of friendship in Moscow in June 1963.

an invitation

to women of all countries in NATO

(North Atlantic Treaty Organization)

Belgium Canada Denmark England France Greece
Iceland Italy Luxembourg the Netherlands Norway
Portugal Turkey United States West Germany

AGAINST THE APPLICATION OF THE STATUTE OF LIMITATIONS TO NAZI WAR CRIMES, AGAINST THE DISSEMINATION OF NUCLEAR ARMS, AGAINST ALL STRIKING FORCES AND PARTICULARLY AGAINST THE MLF vigorous protests have been raised by women, especially in the NATO countries and those which suffered from fascist aggression. The women of NATO countries have already held two meetings against the MLF, the first in the Hague in May 1964, the second in Paris in December 1964. The women of the GFR and the GDR and other countries, forcefully denounce the plans of the authorities of Federal Germany to create a belt of atomic mines on the eastern frontiers of the GFR, risking the turning of this whole region an atomic desert and endangering the lives of millions of people.

(Continued from page 25)

Every day brings new revelations of the crimes of the Americans against Vietnam and of their desire to spread a war that they have practically lost in the South. They have dropped napalm and white phosphorus bombs on North Vietnam. Then the Pentagon has given a blank cheque to planes to bomb any target in the north of the country, whether it be automobiles or just people strolling along the highways, junks on the rivers, or any village picked at random. There is not even a question now of destroying any supposed military target. The aggressors against the DRV are attacking the whole people cynically admitting their intention to commit genocide. Schools are their favourite targets, and this they also had to admit. As to their "experiments" with toxic gasses, they serve to remind those who have a tendency to short memories, of other experiments on human guinea pigs, those carried out by the nazi doctors in the death camps. But it is impossible to have an entire people put to death in gas chambers.

The horror that these American actions have aroused in the world will serve to make people understand more clearly the fascist, criminal and nazi character of the lost war that the Americans are carrying out in South East Asia.

As to the reaction of the Vietnamese people themselves in the face of these new trials imposed on them, it is easily predictable. When I left South Vietnam, all leaders of the National Liberation Front, all patriots, even in the smallest village, were perfectly aware of the fact that the closer they come to victory, the more atrocities will be used against them. They know that everything will be tried to scare them, to make them bow down. Has not almost everything already been tried in vain, for some twenty years now, against this people? But each crime had the contrary effect than that sought by the aggressor. It will be the same this time also.

Whatever may be the new progress made in the way of atrocities by the Pentagon, we can be sure of one thing: these crimes of the defeated one will not prevent the defeat of the imperialists in Vietnam. Nevertheless, this escalation towards horror risks to lead, not only to the death of hundreds of Vietnamese children, but in a not too distant future, to millions of other deaths, to a world war ...

"Operation tear-gas" has already backfired against its sponsors, ruining what was left of the prestige of the USA in the world.

Nevertheless, when such evil deeds take place every day, when villages of a peaceful and independent State can burn in the hell-fires of napalm and phosphorus, it is too little to say, according to the nice words of Fucik: "Men, be on guard." If Fucik had survived the nazi prisons to see what is going on today, he would shout tirelessly: "Men, act!"

So fragile, so soft, so strong ...

They wore red dresses, the colour of spilled blood

In South Vietnam there exists a strange army, without guns, which is everywhere, in the cities and countryside, which is almost never mentioned in press reports, but which has everywhere played, even before the first guerillas took up arms, a tremendous role in the struggle of the Vietnamese people against the aggressor. It is the long-haired army, numbering millions ...

I had the opportunity to mingle for some time with this army and to study its forms of political struggle, which are extremely complex, courageous and able, always aiming at protecting the population against the crimes of the occupiers, at raising the living standard in spite of the war, and especially to morally weaken, disorganise and paralyse the enemy, all this through legal and semi-legal means.

Having been with this women's army, without uniform so as to circulate incognito, sometimes just a few hundred metres from enemy positions, I was able to judge the effectiveness of those who baptised me Chi Tan — so that my name would never be uttered near indiscreet ears —. This name is common in Vietnamese families, which as a rule have many children, and means, "The Eighth Sister".

Let the coming of enemy reinforcements be announced by the information service of the NLF, and suddenly hundreds of villagers seem to feel the irresistible urge to invade the highways with carts. Huge crowds, coming from all surrounding villages, by their passive presence, block all traffic.

After every terrorist bombardment of the liberated zones, you will note the following extraordinary spectacle: thousands of women, old people and children (the men are in the army at the front) travel along, on foot, towards the nearest city, carrying victims on stretchers of bamboo or in hammocks, in front of the column. Sometimes American planes, spotting the demonstration, swoop in to machine-gun them. The guerillas then come into action, concentrating their fire on the planes which do not dare come down too low in their attacks. If there are nevertheless victims, they are also carried at the front of the column and the march continues. In the crowd you can see the yellow robes of the Buddhist monks.

Girls of the Khmer minority, as in Tra Vinh, have a habit on such occasions to dress in red, thus expressing their determination to march even if they are shot at, until their blood is spilled ...

More and more often recently, while I was there, we noted that the demonstrations were aimed directly at the Americans, whose withdrawal is demanded. This is normal as, more and more, the Americans themselves are conducting the war against the South Vietnamese people, themselves piloting the planes and helicopters and dropping bombs on the civilian population, whose only crime is to have freed their land. Everyone participated in these immense demonstrations where the people of the liberated countryside, without weapons, march to the cities, in a way hounding the enemy which finds itself encircled, helping the city population to loosen the yoke.

By lying down under the wheels

To try and swell the thinning ranks of the puppet army where mass desertions are multiplying, the Americans press-gang the youth. But how many times has the long-haired army stopped convoys by lying under the wheels, while the leaders of the "Women's Union for the Liberation of South Vietnam" hold discussions with the officers, who are in a way imprisoned and disarmed by the crowd which clings to them. "If you do not free our sons," they say, "we will keep your soldiers, as we need somebody for the harvest, to bring money into the house ..." Such actions can last for hours. Sometimes it is a crowd of young women, babies in their arms, which invades the army centre demanding: "Return our brothers and husbands to us, without them who will bring in the harvest? Who will feed our children?"

And the head puppet, overwhelmed by these women who threaten to leave their children with him to look after at the army post, if he does not free the conscripts, has to give in, while the babies also play their demoralising role by crying, wetting the offices and documents of the gentlemen in charge of the district.

The language of the scarf

The long-haired army, made up solely of volunteers, is constantly available, every "soldier" living in a home, participating as everyone else, in production, study, campaigns of hygiene and prevention organised everywhere in the liberated zones by the Front. But at the signal of their elected officers, they go into action, actions that are sometimes coordinated at the level of a whole region or district, organised exactly as for armed struggle with guns in hand, with shock troops, who are volunteers, going ahead, with reserves, scouts, etc.

Without counting the women whose duty is to remain in the villages to look after the children of these "soldiers", prepare food, etc.

In these peaceful battles, the traditional black and white scarf, worn by all peasant women, can play a large role. Tied in such and such a manner, it can indicate things to the crowd, concerning the hour of the demonstration, the road to follow and the opposing forces that have to be dealt with.

These human waves, rolling in towards the offices of those responsible for crimes, have often forced the enemy to give in on a point, powerless in spite of his crushing military superiority.

So fragile, so soft, so strong

For every woman who falls in this struggle for her country and village, whether Buddhist or Communist, worker or peasant, dozens of new fighters for peace, independence, democracy and neutrality of South Vietnam spring forth.

Much courage is needed to 'come out' this way, without weapons, in the face of enemy machine guns, perhaps even more than for an attack on an "M 113" convoy with hand grenades. The men of South Vietnam know it full well, and think of it when they call their women "my company commander" with a smile full of tenderness and pride, their women, so fragile, so soft, so strong in the face of the enemy ...

SLAVES
of the 20th century

In our last issue, we told our readers of modern methods of enslavement practiced by a number of western European countries towards immigrant workers, of the fate of Italian and Spanish workers, men and women, forced to leave their countries to earn a living. Today we would like to tell you the reasons why thousands of Portuguese also suffer the same fate as their Spanish and Italian comrades.

What drives them to become expatriates?

In an encyclopedia published in 1964, under the heading "Portugal" the following information is given regarding social conditions: "The cost of living has increased by 150%, while in the same period wages increased by only 5%. For the same work women and youths are paid only 40 to 50% of the men's rate. According to official statistics, 80% of the population (Portugal has 9 million inhabitants), live in miserable housing conditions. Compulsory social insurance does not exist; there are only privately run insurance schemes."

From other sources of information it appears that 47% of the economically active population is employed in agriculture. In Alentejo and Ribatejo, regions of large scale agricultural exploitations ('Montes') the average wage of agricultural workers is from 20 to 30 escudos per day (75 cents to $1.60). And it must be understood that these workers are unemployed an average of 6 months a year.

In the north-East (Tras Os Montes), the most miserable region of the country, the average income per inhabitant is 5,000 escudos per year ($180.).

In industry, which employs 30% of the active population, a highly qualified worker will only earn 50 to 60 escudos per day, a labourer from 18 to 25 escudos. But the latter can still consider themselves as privileged. There are far from enough jobs for all.

The shortage of qualified workers at all levels (workers, foremen, engineers) is acute. In the country as a whole the rate of illiteracy (the highest in Europe) is, on the average, 40%. It goes up to 80% in the countryside. Portugal has the dubious honour of holding some other European records: one of the highest rates of infant mortality, the largest number of births with no medical assistance whatsoever.

It is not surprising that the workers seek a way out, try to assure their families a better life by becoming expatriates like their brothers of Spain and Italy.

As a result of bureaucratic and economic difficulties all forms of illegal emigration are practiced on a large scale. Of late, and as a natural consequence of the deteriorating economic life in Portugal, this illegal emigration has assumed desperate proportions, as will be seen by the following news items.

"Twenty-five Portuguese men seeking to cross the Franco-Spanish frontier at Irun were found hiding under the tarpaulin of a haulage lorry. They were arrested by the Spanish Civil Guard officers."

"The Spanish Civil Guard discovered in S. Sebastian an organisation of Spaniards devoted to the transport of Portuguese workers seeking to enter France illegally ...

These operations brought to the organisation an income of £5,415 already paid, plus £2,150 to be collected from the emigrants on their safe arrival in France."

Some aspects of their lives

As with their Spanish and Italian brothers, they mostly live in shacks. The price they have to pay per bed seems, at first glance, to be cheap enough, but as quite a number of them are packed into one room, the proprietor pockets a good sum of money taken all together. Their wages are lower than those of their work mates who are citizens of the country that 'welcomes' them. Even on the question of family allowances, they meet serious discrimination. In France for instance, the family allowances received by a Portuguese worker, father of two children, is only 50% of that paid to a French worker, and if there are four children involved, he receives only 25% of what is paid to his French work mate in the same condition.

In many cases, the bosses try to use the immigrant workers against the national working force.

In spite of certain spectacular promises such as suitable housing, recreation, etc., made by recruiters, the immigrant workers continue to live in conditions subject to discrimination, deprived of numerous rights. But the progressive organisations of the countries where they work take an interest in them and help with their problems, denouncing this new form of slavery which today affects a growing number of women and girls.

STEFI BAKSA SOOS

READ FOR YOU

FEBRUARY

Novel of the occupation year 1941

by THEUN DE VRIES

Among the many books devoted to the peoples' resistance to fascism, Women of the Whole World chose one which has recently been published.

It is the story of the February 1941 strike in Amsterdam, a strike which lasted 2 days and wrote a glorious page in the annals of the European Antifascist Resistance. At the beginning there were acts of protest against the cruelty exercised against the Jewish and working population of the city. Then all demonstrations were banned, and the slightest attempt of this kind was put down with force, the brutal strong-arm men of the S.S. and the Feldgendarmerie were everywhere. But irresistibly, resistance grew against that terror, against the extermination prepared long in advance, against the deportation of workers to Germany and against the looting of the country. On this memorable February morning, the docks, factories and offices emptied. Hundreds of thousands of "strollers" went from the suburbs to the centre of the city. Workers, employees, men and women, young and old, teachers, students, in other words patriots from the most varied levels, were flowing like a living river through the labyrinth of streets and lanes. There were neither slogans nor banners, nothing that could provide an excuse for reprisals. Leaflets were handed from hand to hand, unattainable to the spies. The fascists were taken by surprise. The strike was a tremendous success, an openly declared opposition to the fascist invaders and their stooges. It was a coordinated action in which everyone had to clearly take a stand, in which many who loudly proclaimed their patriotism in peacetime quietly faded away in the face of action, and where some neighbour from whom one did not expect a courageous attitude, took an active part in the struggle.

Giving a detailed picture of the many aspects of this illegal movement, the well-known Netherlands writer has been able to expertly tie together the different episodes into a fascinating whole. The chapter entitled "Women's war" tells how a group of indignant women prevented a tram from moving by throwing themselves onto the rails. When they noted that the strike-breaker who was driving it wore a swastika, they poured choice insults at him. In this scene, as in many others, appears the robust humour of the people which comes to the fore even in the most tragic moments.

Many of those Resistance fighters did not live the see the hour of freedom strike.

"February" is both the story of an event and a warning and makes absorbing reading, because of its masterly portrayal of real characters participating in real events — men, women, youth, who, rising above numerous contradictions, fight side by side against fascism, for national liberation and human dignity.

C. W.

WOMEN'S PRESS

BULGARIAN WOMAN

In issue No. 5, 1961, Women of the Whole World devoted its column on "women's press" to the magazine "Jenata Dnies" which at that time was already the women's magazine with the broadest circulation in the Bulgarian People's Republic and winner of a well-merited national prize. Four years have gone by since then during which the young Republic has made tremendous progress in all fields.

The considerable contribution of women to this development is naturally also reflected in their press, as the delegates of the WIDF Council held in October 1964 in Sofia noted. To inform the women of other countries about their lives, the Bulgarian Women's Committee also publishes a magazine called "Bulgarian Woman" which comes out in German, English, Spanish and French. Like Bulgaria itself, the magazine is attractive. Every page, either coloured or in black and white, with a careful lay-out on heavy glossy paper, seems to reflect a bit of the warm sunny Bulgarian summer.

We can state without exaggeration that "Bulgarian Woman" is every bit as attractive as any magazine of its kind. For magazines as for people, the first test they have to meet is to please the eye. Let us get better acquainted with it by taking up an issue, whichever is handy.

Here on the first page is a brief outline of the country's history. In an easy to read style we learn of the habits and customs of old times, the situation of the people and especially of women during the 86 years which have elapsed since liberation from the Turkish yoke, and the rapid development of industry and agriculture during the last 20 years in which women have played an effective part. There are pages devoted to unforgetable heroines of the Resistance.

A village woman speaks:

"I come from Assenovgrad. I do not at all exaggerate when I say that September 9, 1944 (date of the country's liberation) is a symbol of happiness to me. I was only 4 years old, but I remember very well with what emotion we awaited the return of my father from Plovdiv Prison. The best sons and daughters of the people had languished in prisons or had fallen in the battle for liberation or were shot by assassins. My father did not enjoy his so desired freedom very long. He died shortly after as a result of the torture and privation he had suffered. If there had been no September 9 we would still today be living like slaves, our women would still give birth to children in huts or in the fields, without any help but that of a fellow workmate, our sick would still be taken to Bourgas in ox-drawn carts. Today all is changed in Gramatikova, our village, where the youth know of these conditions only from the tales of their elders."

Under the heading "Singing Wreath", we find items concerning music, poems, dance groups, a joyful youth in which the text is very brief but illustrations numerous. Interviews with women of other countries who are guests of the Bulgarian women. Articles on home furnishing in Bulgaria and handicrafts testify to the dexterity of the women of that country and of their appreciation for folk art with which they love to decorate their homes. Other questions dealt with are health, science, sports, philately and of course fashion and recipes, for example, how to prepare real Bulgarian yoghurt, recommended for young or old.

Such is this magazine which presents the life and problems of today's Bulgarian women in a smart and attractive manner.

C. W.

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When Juan Carlos Castagnino paints or draws a silhouette of a woman or a gaucho, the living picture of a horse, or the red ochre tinted pampa landscape, the woman is sad, the gaucho is proud, the horse is crying almost human cries, the landscape bears the mark of time and history. Castagnino imbues his figures with something more than line and colour, something more than movement. His drawings and paintings are a language which express complex human reality with great simplicity, precisely set forth in the proper coordinates of space and time. And he expresses this with poetry.

Castagnino types have a clearly defined nationality. The woman, gaucho, the horse and pampa can only be Argentine. The features, colour, composition, the movement of the characters, in fact, the technique of Castagnino does not fit in with any particular school, although it has antecedents and elements similar to many, as have all expressions of universal culture. The work of Castagnino testifies to the existence of Velasquez, Goya, Cezanne, Picasso.

But what makes Castagnino stand out first of all is the language spoken by his characters, their deep humanism, their popular appeal. The realism of Castagnino does not lie in the technique of expression; it is a philosophical attitude. As in life itself, simplicity means complexity and contrasts, drama and poetry, passion, pain and anguish are expressed in the simple daily things.

Castagnino did the illustrations for "Martin

Fierro", Jose Hernandez's epic poem. It earned him the greatest praise from the critics and the greatest support and respect of his people, which is his public. It is only natural that Castagnino should have felt inspired by the legendary hero of Argentine folklore. And this inspiration is expresed especially in pictures. Castagnino did not limit himself to illustrating the poem; he gave it a graphic life, he recreated Martin Fierro using his extraordinary methods of plastic art.

In the work of Castagnino there are three or four themes which are always present in his pictorial universe; one of these themes is Woman.

Juan Carlos Castagnino was born at Mar del Plata, in the province of Buenos Aires in 1904. He is a member of the Academy of Fine Arts of Argentina; with Siqueiros and Spilimbergo he painted murals. He was awarded a large number of national and international distinctions. His works have been exhibited in New York, Paris, Tokyo, Rome, Budapest, Prague, etc.